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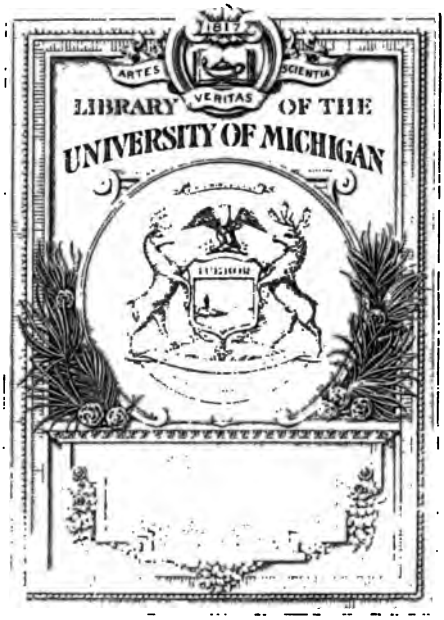
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JOSEPH JEFFERSON

By the Same Author

THE EUGENE FIELD I KNEW

Illustrated. 12mo. $1.25

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PLAYER

Privately printed

Mau

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To Frances Wilson
With Cordial regards of
J. J. Ingalls
March 20th.
1897.

JOSEPH

Reminiscences of a Celloid Player

FRANCIS WILSON

[illegible]

[illegible]

CHARLES [illegible]

JOSEPH JEFFERSON

Reminiscences of a Fellow Player

BY

FRANCIS WILSON

Illustrated

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1906

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To My Wife

146549

JOSEPH JEFFERSON

Born, Philadelphia, Pa.	Feb. 20, 1829
Appeared in "black face" in imitation of T. D. ("Jim Crow") Rice at Washington, D. C. .	1833
Acted in Mexico, a camp follower of the American Army	1846
Married Margaret Clement Lockyer	1850
Joined Laura Keen's Theatre. Success as "Dr. Pangloss"	1857
Winter Garden, success as "Caleb Plummer" and "Salem Scudder"	1859
Adapted "Oliver Twist" for the stage . . .	1860
Death of Mrs. Jefferson	1861
In Australia and England	1861–5
Olympic Theatre, New York, in revised and re-written Rip Van Winkle	1866
Married Sarah Isabel Warren, his cousin . . .	1867
Named "The Little Church around the Corner"	1870
In London, "Rip Van Winkle," "Golightly," "Hugh de Brass"	1875–7
Produced his amended version of "The Rivals," Philadelphia	1880
Published Autobiography	1889–90
Given the degree of M. A. by Yale University .	1892
Given the degree of M. A. by Harvard University	1895
Presented with a loving-cup by the actors and actresses of America	1895
All-Star "Rivals" Tour	1896
Died at Palm Beach, Florida . . .	April 23, 1905

PREFACE

THOSE who seek the facts of his life, and the standard and accepted estimates of Jefferson's work and art, will find them in the adequate pages of Mr. William Winter.

Those who would acquaint themselves with the ineffable charm of his personality must linger over the pages of the comedian's Autobiography, a book to be mentioned only with Colley Cibber's Apology, equal in interest, beyond it in charm.

The present writer has aimed merely to set down the remembrances, mostly anecdotal, which were his over a number of years in connection with the subject of this sketch.

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JOSEPH JEFFERSON

I have devoted all my life to acting, and I stand to-day in awe of its greatness.

My boys sometimes get discouraged, and I say to them: "Go out and do something for somebody. Go out and give something to anybody, if it's only a pair of woollen stockings to a poor old woman. It will take you away from yourselves and make you happy!"

JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

CHAPTER I

FIRST ACQUAINTANCE

I WAS never introduced to Joseph Jefferson; we just shook hands. To me his name was the synonym for all that was highest and best in our profession, and I had long wondered if I should ever come to know him.

I first saw him one Saturday afternoon, in 1870, as I can see him now, on the southwest corner of Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue, New York, eating Malaga grapes out of a paper bag. In those days there was a fruit-stand on that corner. He stood on the curbstone abstractedly eating the grapes and watching the crowd file into Booth's Theatre for the matinee performance of "Rip Van Winkle," which was then in the midst of an eight months' run. How I drank him in and ate him up as he stood there — and I remember how, boy-like, I brushed past him just to be able to feel that I had come in contact

with him! My action had not disturbed him, for he did not turn toward me or make any sign that he had heard my frightened words of apology. This relieved me, for I was so scared at my temerity that I should not have known what to say or do. I followed him, at a respectful distance, across the street, past the main entrance of the theatre, to that mysterious portal, the stage door, through which he vanished from my admiring gaze.

Since that time I have had pleasure in watching people assemble to witness performances of my own, but it has always recalled my first glimpse of Joseph Jefferson and that paper bag of Malaga grapes! Once, in later years, as we were passing that corner together, I told him of the incident, placed him in the exact position in which he had stood, and begged him to eat imaginary grapes in an abstracted way, and together we acted over the little comedy, the original of which was so fraught with importance to me. This amused him greatly, and as we passed up the street he admonished me always to preserve as much as possible the simplicity and buoyancy of youth.

I had often been his auditor, but had never had him as one of my own, so far as I know, until November, 1889, at the old Globe Theatre in Boston, when he commanded me to place a box at the disposal of himself, Mrs. Malaprop Drew, and Sir Lucius O'Florence for a performance of "The Oolah." It was an anxious day for me, and I came upon the stage with my voice full of quavers and my memory ready, as "Acres" says, "to ooze out of the ends of my fingers." I gathered myself with an effort, and it was not long before I had the reassuring pleasure of seeing Mr. Jefferson give way to a hearty burst of laughter which but for the back of his chair must have upset his equilibrium, while Mrs. Drew and Mr. Florence seemed to be greatly enjoying themselves. On the instant all nervousness vanished, and the performance proceeded to the end with confidence and spirit, "Rip Van Winkle" kissing his hand to me as the curtain fell.

I had been corresponding with Mr. Jefferson about his Autobiography, but newly begun in the November "Century Magazine," and he had promised to help with gifts of prints and letters

in the extra-illustrating of my own copy when the Autobiography should be published in book form. He asked me to come and see him, appointing the business office of the Park Theatre, Boston, as the place, and one o'clock as the hour. As I entered, he sprang from his chair, and before anyone could introduce us, he had grasped me by the hand — and thus was realized my youthful dream of meeting Rip Van Jefferson.

The first thing about him to impress me, at friendly close range, was the kindly, winsome, and at the same time inquiring, penetrating expression of his face. My notes, made on the same day, say that he was above rather than below the middle size. He was thin, and his face was much wrinkled, which is not to be wondered at, for, as was said of his illustrious predecessor, David Garrick, "no man's face has received more wear and tear." This is true of all actors, for "their faces have double the business of any other man."

Mr. Jefferson's mixed gray and brown hair was worn rather long, compared with the fashion of the day (which resembles that of the convict crop), and there was a plentiful wad of it on the

top of his, I should say, rather small head. The hair was parted comparatively low down on the left side, combed up over the front of the head, and curved up toward a generous right ear. The nose and chin were rather prominent, giving what Mr. Jefferson himself has elsewhere humorously described "as a classical contour, neither Greek nor Roman, but of the pure Nut-cracker type." As it impressed me, in that part just over the eyes, denoting perception, the forehead was full, broad, and especially prominent. The mouth was exceptionally kind in expression, and his speech, neither low nor high in tone, had great clearness and remarkable carrying quality, with a tendency to the *sh* sound in the use of sibilants. But the eye was the great feature of the face. There was mildness, sweetness, frankness, fun, jollity, and especially was there riveted attention in it when he listened — and no man to my knowledge ever listened better! Good health shone out of his eyes — and how they did shine; and what wonderful control he had of them, giving them, as his long professional practice had taught him, every shade of meaning and expression his fancy might care to depict. I noticed

an unusual white mark in one of his eyes, due no doubt to an operation for glaucoma, which threatened, in 1872, to rob him entirely of sight, — a calamity happily averted by the skill of Dr. Reuling, of Baltimore.

I found him, as I knew he would be, keenly alive to the humorous; and the conversation did not go far in any direction before it reminded him of something laughable in the storehouse of his vast experience. He dipped liberally and narrated skilfully, employing voice, eyes, hands, hair, and body. He was interested in some prints I had brought with me of his grandfather and other theatrical people of a past age, and he gave me a minute history of each. An etching of the father of William Warren, the comedian, he declared to be a counterpart of the son, then just dead.

In speaking of the great popularity of his contribution to the "Century Magazine," his Autobiography, he replied, giving me an exceedingly interesting account of the request to publish the work. He had never before written anything for publication, and was not aware that he had any talent in that direction. When he began it, about

three years earlier, he did so haltingly at first, but soon got into the swing of it, and as recollections would come to him he would rise at unseemly hours of the night to jot them down, fearful that he might not be able to recall them in the morning.

He told me how the "Century" at first wished to publish only extracts from the work. This request was refused. With a quiet chuckle of satisfaction he modestly added that since the appearance of the first instalment he had been requested to extend the story.

Here Mr. Florence joined the party, and then began a little banter. Mr. Jefferson explained that he was absent-minded at times, and told of having written a letter to his wife the other night, and not wishing to forget to post it he carried it in his hand, got into a car, paid his fare on entering, and sat down. Later, the conductor, forgetting Mr. Jefferson had paid, touched him on the shoulder, and held out his hand. Mr. Jefferson abstractedly put the letter into the conductor's hand, saying:

"Mail this for me, will you, please?"

"I have n't time to mail your letters!" yelled

the fare-taker, which brought Mr. Jefferson to himself, when, of course, explanations and apologies followed.

The story was inimitably told, and caused much laughter.

"Oh, that man Jefferson 's a funny creature," said Florence.

"How do you know?" I asked.

"Oh, he makes me laugh," replied Florence. Turning to Jefferson, he said:

"By the way, Joe, when I ask you at night [in "The Rivals"] 'What 's the matter with you,' and you turn and say, in that God-forsaken way, 'I don't know *what* 's the matter with me,' I can't help laughing to save my life. At that moment there is n't a particle of Jefferson in you, nothing that reminds me of your real self!"

This pleased Mr. Jefferson very much. He seemed greatly to relish Florence's compliments. He was susceptible to honest admiration. I have often heard him declare since that he would not give the snap of his finger for anybody who was not.

Mr. Jefferson had written for me on one of his photographs — the eyes of which he thought

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AND WILLIAM FLORENCE IN "THE RIVALS"

From a photograph by Falk

Non

rather starey — and I was trying to dry the ink by waving the picture in the air.

"I fear I have written a round, bold hand, Sir Lucius," quoted Mr. Jefferson, and then, turning to Florence, he added: "By the way, Billy, there's a line in the 'Rivals' I never speak."

"There's a lot in that piece, Joe, if you'd only study it!" instantly retorted Florence.

Nobody enjoyed this more than Mr. Jefferson, who was one of the few men capable of enjoying a joke on himself.

"But I always give you the cues!" comically whined Jefferson.

"Yes," said Florence, "and the cues are about all you do give me!"

Mr. Jefferson told another "absent-minded" story. When in Washington, thirty years ago, he had been introduced to Senator Stephen A. Douglas and was invited to drink. On leaving the place one of the party who accompanied Mr. Jefferson asked if he knew what he had done.

"I can't imagine — something dreadful, I'll be bound! What was it?"

"Why, Douglas paid for those drinks with a five-dollar piece and you pocketed the change!"

Mr. Jefferson told me that Mrs. Drew, who was nine years his senior, was facetiously known in the company as the "soubrette," while Mr. Florence was called the "juvenile man."

He then spoke pleasantly of "Erminie," which he had seen at the Casino, New York. He said he had often played the character of "Caddy"; only, he added, it was known as "Jacques Strop."

"I used to play it, Wilson, with an actor named Browne — Browne, with an 'e' — and a very good actor he was too; he played the other thief. Billy," to Mr. Florence, "did you ever know Browne?"

"If I say 'Which Browne?'" said Florence, "you 'll say 'Brown Stout,' I suppose!"

At this trite sally there were groans and indignant glances from all present. Florence, feeling himself properly rebuked, meekly removed his hat, bowed obsequiously, and with mock humility crept out of the office, — not a word having been uttered from the time of his effort at wit until his exit.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS

THE prime characteristic of Jefferson's nature was his naturalness, and this applies with equal truth to him as an actor and as a man. Few have gone through so much lionizing and become less vain. He had a very proper and a very just estimate of himself and of his abilities, but, as he said, it was little less than disgraceful for a man to carry himself as "I am Sir Oracle, and when I speak let no man ope his lips." "And," he added, "the actor who made this evident on the stage lacked much that belonged to his art."

"Why, you dear, great man!" said a most sincere but very effusive woman to whom I had introduced him at New Rochelle.

"Madam," he replied as gently as he could, "you make me very uncomfortable."

"I have a horror," he said to me, "of being

as narrow in certain views of life as Carlyle or Dr. Johnson, who thought their way in many things was the only way, and that those who took a contrary view were ignorantly, terribly wrong."

He was a believer in the specialist; he thought the world and its manifold considerations too great to be grasped by any one mind.

"I have great confidence in the fellow who does some one thing better than anybody else. I love Rembrandt for his portraits, Corot for his landscapes, Rousseau and Dupré for their skies and woods, Diaz and the Venetians for their color, Millet for his masterly portrayal of the peasant, Mauve, Israels, Neuhuys, each for the skill of his specialty. The surgeon, the entomologist, the psychologist, the gymnast, and the chiropodist are all to be admired for the perfection to which they have brought their skill."

Nothing was too small for Jefferson to interest himself in. His delicious sense of humor allowed him to find great entertainment in matters that other people would have passed by or thought too trivial. Wax figures in a museum or dolls in a window held conversation for his especial delectation. He sometimes fancied them saying

to each other: "Look at that old fool taking up his time staring and laughing at us. I wonder if he thinks we have no feelings." Or: "Is n't this a sloppy sort of day for dolls? Not even fit to look out of the window!" Or: "Hello, Margery, who tore your skirt?" And so I have heard him insist, laughingly, the figures would talk for him. He was no unusual visitor to the toy-stores throughout the country.

The fact of the whole matter, I suppose, is that not only was he in love with children, their ways, their naïve manner of regarding things and giving expression to their thoughts concerning them, but that he was in love as well with what gave them so much pleasure. As I think again of it, I feel that the quaint humor of the man had much to do with it all.

I met him one day in a great toy-store, and he confessed that he visited the place three or four times a year, not only to make purchases, but also to see the children buy and hear their joyful expressions and exclamations. "I get a great deal of fun out of it," he said.

"You seem to have had a full measure of enjoyment in life, Sir Joseph," I said to him.

"Of course I have," he replied, "but I feel that all this is nothing compared with what is to come. This life is merely a rehearsal. I have had more fortune, more happiness than falls to the lot of most men, but they can 'ring down on me' as soon as they please, only so there is no delay, no lingering; let them give me a 'quick curtain.' None of your slow fellows with long protracted red-fire accompaniment."

"Ring down on you! Why, surely you are not tired of it all?" I ventured.

"Oh no, not at all, not at all," he replied quickly. "I shall be content to go on at this rate for a great many years. I 'd like to fish until I 'm ninety, and then I'd like to paint a little and act a little, but I want you to understand that I 'm not afraid of what 's to come, and I do not wish to degenerate into the lean and slippered pantaloon. No, when the end comes, let it come quickly!"

It was not that he was "afraid of what 's to come"; his confidence in that was too great to be at all fearful. It was that, seriously and humorously, he saw no pressing necessity of making any terrestrial change. His health was so fine,

his enjoyment of all things so keen, and every day so filled with the life beautiful of family, fame, and fortune, that it is small wonder he rebelled at any thought of separation from what was so appealingly attractive. Tactless friends and thoughtless critics jarred his sense of delicacy with injudicious remarks and publications. Even eight or ten years ago, he wrote:

"The newspaper criticisms on my acting of late are very mournful in tone. They write, 'This may be the last time you will ever see him!' 'He must soon pass away!' They sound more like obituary notices than critiques. I expect to see shortly, 'None but the family are invited — no flowers, etc.'"

He told me of being at table once where there was a number of people. A lull in the conversation permitted an affected fellow to drawl at him:

"Aw — Mr. Jefferson — aw — when are you — aw — going — aw — to retire from the stage?"

To which he replied pointedly:

"I am only waiting for you to say the word!"

He jested about such things, but they hurt him. He loved his art; he learned something new about it every day, perhaps at every new per-

formance, and he strove with remarkable vitality and rare delicacy to prove this increased knowledge to his public. Naturally, he sought to postpone as long as possible the time when he must surrender the exercise of that in which he had acquired such skill and had won so much success. The breath of fame, as to others, was dear to him. Naturally, too, he resented, even though he resented it playfully, any intimation of the approach of useless old age which he, carefully on the alert, had not yet detected. And he was confident of being the first to note any diminution of his powers, upon which he meant instantly to withdraw from public life. Like most happy men, he was regretfully conscious of the swift going of time.

"How the summer has flown!" he writes, (in August, 1901). "I dig in the garden in the morning and paint all of the afternoon. Time slips away, and I have n't got half done that I want to have behind me — I am going on for 73. God will soon make a sweet little angel of me, so I must hurry up. Till then I am

Faithfully yours,

J. JEFFERSON.

He took occasion to deny before the curtain premature reports of his intention to withdraw from the stage. He declared that, like a well-bred dog, he meant to withdraw on the slightest intimation of being kicked out. At the time of one of these reports, a young newspaper man was sent to ascertain if it were true or false. He was told that Mr. Jefferson had gone to bed and could not be interviewed. The young man was insistent and sent a card to the actor's room with this message, "Is there any truth in the report that you are about to retire?"

Back came the answer, "Mr. Jefferson has retired."

On first visiting London I remember to have been much impressed with those circular commemorative tablets let into the walls of certain houses. I came quite by accident upon one that thrilled me:

DAVID GARRICK LIVED HERE.

Later on I saw another inscription, equally thrilling:

MRS. SIDDONS LIVED HERE.

At Stratford-on-Avon I found the chief interest of the place centred about a player-playwright. I knew that actors and dramatists had been Poets Laureate of England, but so thick had been the air of prejudice about me, I felt half convinced that Jonson, Dryden, Colley Cibber, and Davenant must have come to such an honor only after some process of mental nullification.

At Venice my eyes bulged out in astonishment at a life-size bronze statue to the comedian Goldoni. "Can it be possible," said I to myself, "that our village pastor is mistaken, and that all hope of eternal salvation is *not* to be abandoned by those who enter the portals of the player's profession?" I remembered then how, at home, Jefferson, Murdoch, Booth, Barrett, Robson, Crane, Mary Anderson, Charlotte Cushman, and a host of others were loved and respected, and I confessed to a feeling of distress that our village pastor's predictions were to be unfulfilled and that not unlikely I was to be deprived of an ultimately exciting experience in the nether world.

I could not remember that any statue or tablets had been erected to actors and actresses in Amer-

ica, and, in the flush of my enthusiasm, I longed to hasten home and dot all sorts of façades with all sorts of tablets.

While on tour with the "All-Star Cast" of "The Rivals" (1896), I spoke to Mr. Jefferson about affixing a tablet to his birthplace, on the southwest corner of Sixth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia. He modestly objected, saying that it was an unusual thing to do while the subject of such a memorial was still living. The matter was dropped for the time, but later, at the suggestion of my friend De Witt Miller, he, the late A. W. Whelpley, of Cincinnati, and I put up a tablet with this inscription:

JOSEPH JEFFERSON, THE ACTOR,
WAS BORN HERE
FEB. 20, 1829.
HERE'S YOUR GOOD HEALTH AND YOUR FAMILY'S
MAY THEY LIVE LONG AND PROSPER.

On New Year's Day of the same year he wrote me apropos of the tablet, —

"So you would do it — God forgive you!"

I believe He has.

From the mention of Jefferson's birthplace, it is an easy step to the subject of his first appearance on the stage, which has been stated as being now in one thing, now in another, and then again in something else. Mr. Jefferson could not recall, nor was there any family tradition, in what play he made his first appearance. He felt it to be positive that, as a child in long clothes, he had often been pressed into theatrical service. In this connection he has written humorously of the histrionic ambition of his mother with respect to himself.

The following letter, a copy of which the owner, Mr. John T. Loomis, of Washington, has kindly presented me, naïvely sets forth the earliest recollection of our "Rip" as to his first appearance:

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 18/66.

MY DEAR COYLE,[1] — As usual you have overwhelmed me with compliments. The notice is most charmingly written and praises me far beyond my desert.

[1] John F. Coyle, of the "National Intelligencer," Washington, D. C.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON'S BIRTHPLACE ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SIXTH AND SPRUCE STREETS, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

The memorial tablet was placed on the house by Francis Wilson, DeWitt Miller, and A. W. Whelpley — Mr. Wilson and H. H. Furness, Jr., are standing in doorway

I have made a few cuts in the article, as you kindly suggested that I should alter any mistakes it might contain. I know that it is generally believed that I was born in the Capital, but it is an error. Philadelphia is my native city, so I have passed my pen through the lines referring to my birth and my having played Cora's Child with "éclat." I certainly did enact the Peruvian infant, but as the author has never made the child express his opinion on any subject during the play, there is but little opportunity afforded for giving much "éclat" to the performance. The only point I remember to have made was in the last act.

J. R. Scott being the Rolla, you may readily conceive that he was rather unsteady upon his legs during the latter portion of the play, and as he rushed, or rather staggered, upon the bridge and lifted me on his shoulders, I found that Rolla was even more elevated than myself. Feeling the insecurity of my position, I made a grab for the hair of the noble Peruvian, and in the struggle pulled off his wig. You may judge of the effect when I tell you that the top of Rolla's head was as bare as the bottom of Cora's baby. This,

therefore, was the only point I made with "a claw." After that I had better close. . . .

Mr Jefferson recalled perfectly his first appearance in black face, a miniature reproduction of Jim Crow (T. D. Rice).

"Daddy" Rice, as he was familiarly called, had seen young Jefferson's imitation and insisted that the boy should appear at his benefit. The six-foot minstrel dumped his pigmy imitator out of a bag onto the stage, and the twain, beside making a decided hit, were showered with coins, — twenty-four dollars of which were gathered and *promised* to "young Joe."

On the margin of a copy of Mr. Jefferson's Autobiography which he gave me, Mrs. John Drew wrote that she was present at Rice's benefit performance, and remembered well Mr. Jefferson's appearance and mimicry of Rice, which was received with uproarious laughter.

"Why do you wish me to write on the margin of the book?" asked Mrs. Malaprop.

"Yes," interjected Bob Acres, "why have anybody write on the margin or in any other part of the book? You ask me to write something for

you in the Autobiography. I did write something in it! By gracious, and by perseverance, I wrote the whole book, and now you wish me to write more. I 'll do it gladly, but why? Why do you wish me to deface the fair white margins?"

Thus driven to explain, the enthusiastic gatherer of autographic plunder said that the writing would give the book distinction. That of the thousands printed this particular copy by its inscription would be especially set apart. It would be proof positive that this volume at least had been in the hands of its author, and as well in the hands of one of whom that author had most graciously written.

There was a pause, during which Acres and Mrs. Malaprop exchanged glances.

"Henceforth," said Jefferson, "I shall submit to autographs and to book inscriptions with a lighter heart."

"And so shall I," added Mrs. Drew.

CHAPTER III

RIP VAN WINKLE

IN November, 1897, "Rip Van Winkle" was given for the last time in Washington, — that is, for the last time that season, — and Mr. Jefferson had not been seen there in the character for a number of years. A vast crowd, many of which could not obtain admission, turned out to say farewell. All felt it might be the last chance to greet the genial Rip.

I went down to see him before the performance, and we had the customary chat in the rear of the box-office, when, as usual, we ranged over divergent subjects. I thanked him for a letter he had written me apropos of Eugene Field and the latter's poem "Little Button Eyes" which had been dedicated to Jefferson.

"Was the letter what you wanted?"

"Precisely, sir; you always do the right thing."

Deprecatingly, "I don't know about that."

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AS "RIP VAN WINKLE"

From a photograph, Copyright 1905 by Charles A. Walker

"You always do the right thing," I repeated.

"Well," he said modestly, "I believe I make fewer mistakes than most men. I think I am tactful rather than politic, the difference between which is very great. We are politic when we do something for ourselves, tactful when we do something for others."

I mentioned having heard genius described as tact and brains.

"Oh," he said, "that is too broad an assertion. A better definition is that genius creates and talent reproduces."

Speaking of happiness, he remarked, "My boys sometimes get discouraged, and I say to them, 'Go out and do something for somebody. Go out and give something to anybody, if it's only a pair of woollen stockings to a poor old woman. It will take you away from yourselves and make you happy!'"

To make those about him happy was the guiding principle of Joseph Jefferson's social as well as his professional life. He was very generous, but few knew the extent of his charities.

While we were talking there in the box-office, I saw a little boy peeping in at the door. I called

to him and asked him to shake hands with Mr. Jefferson. The boy's mother followed, and was elated to find her son chatting with Rip Van Winkle. She explained that the boy's father had told him all about Washington Irving's "Rip of the Catskills" and had given him a book on Christmas that he might read it for himself.

"Now," said the mother, pointing to Mr. Jefferson, "this is Rip; he doesn't look like a man anybody would drive out into the mountains, does he?"

And while the little fellow pondered the matter, Mr. Jefferson's sons and I begged Rip to discard his ferocious aspect and assume a guileless air, if he had it not, — to please to look like a man whom no one would dream of driving out into a fearful storm. The most amiable of men, he was never more amiable than that day. He bubbled over with good-humor. Here, then, was one cause of his great success — all his attractive personal characteristics he carried over into his dramatic portrayals, and by his delicate and human delineation of the character of the sweet-dispositioned Dutchman, by the rare skill of his

acting, he had become a classic along with the works of Washington Irving, Dickens, and Coleman, to whose creatures of the brain Joseph Jefferson has lent personality, a realization never to be disassociated from him or from them.

Presently the mother returned in despair to tell her boy she could not procure a seat, and he was not to see the play after all. The boy's sobs attracted Mr. Jefferson's attention, and with a "God bless his little soul," both mother and son were conducted to the stage, where they were to witness the play from the wings. How she will tell about it for all time, and how increasingly proud the little boy will feel to have been so honored!

We continued our conversation: Mr. Jefferson thought Mrs. Siddons the greatest actress the world had ever seen, because of the parts she had played and in which she had so wonderful a reputation, — the wife and the mother. "Anybody," he said, "can play the part of a maid or those of a Camille order, with powdered face and bare feet, and make people cry, but it is to be remembered that in 'Douglas,' when Mrs. Siddons, just learning of the discovery of her child, whom she supposed dead, asked so

impressively if he were alive, women in the audience fainted."

He was so given to lauding the acting of the present day that I was a little surprised to hear him launch out suddenly and declare that Macready, Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons were right with their eloquent pauses, which were as effective as eloquent speeches. "The whole play passes so swiftly," he said, "that unless you give the minds of the auditors a chance to rest upon the important themes and speeches of the play — time to receive the proper impression, as acid upon copper — there can be no effect or result. I learn something about my art every night, and have but recently verified the justice of the old-time claim for eloquent pauses. Mrs. Siddons was right when she said the secret of acting was proper pauses. George Henry Lewes, who knew more of acting than most critics, added cleverly that one must pause without seeming to do so and without making a wait."

He spoke of a certain actress who was advocating great reformation in the conduct of theatrical business matters. Her ideas were, he thought, absurd. He had told her that because

woman was placed on an equality with man here in America, she now sought to make herself his superior, but that this would never succeed, because women, he believed, had all other endowments except the logical mind.

He spoke of his half-brother, "Charley" Burke, for whom he had an undying affection and respect. He told me that he owed more to Burke than to any other person in this world or the next.

"All the good things Burke did upon the stage — all that I can remember, I do," he declared. "What would the world be if it were not for the wisdom, the skill and example of those who have preceded us?"

Dr. A. W. Whelpley, a common friend, now dead, — an old theatre-goer, a man of fine critical judgment and long experience in matters theatrical, one who had often seen Burke act, — told me that Mr. Jefferson once said to him that the memory of Burke was very precious to him.

"He was a better actor than I am," he continued.

"I have heard you say so," replied Dr. Whelpley.

"And *was* he a better actor than Jefferson?" I demanded.

"No," said Dr. Whelpley, "better actors than Joseph Jefferson have rarely been."

We spoke of "Rip Van Winkle" again, and of its wonderful power to hold the affection of audiences for generation after generation.

"It 's a sturdy old fellow," said Mr. Jefferson, proudly, "built of the material that endures. Do you know I believe it is still in its infancy, and I don't care how long I am spared to play in it!"

Once I wrote him of a play that had failed to please, and remarked that I thought the public liked its old favorites best. To this he made answer as follows:

"You are quite right in saying the public likes its old favorite plays. I wonder how 'Rip Van Winkle' would do? It is forty years since I first acted it,— possibly the public has forgotten it."

He told me of once acting Rip in Easton, Pennsylvania. The curtain had just fallen on the final act of the play, and he was making for his dressing-room, when he was clapped familiarly

on the back by a lout of a stage hand, who bawled:

"Joe, you done well!"

"Why, what did you say to him?" I asked.

"I was astonished, of course, and then amused, so I simply said: 'Do you think so? When we are here again, come to see us.' And he replied, 'Bet your life I will.'"

I asked him if there were any truth in the story of his going into a bank to cash a check, and on being refused because of there being no one to identify him, he leaned up against the counter and, in the tones of Rip, exclaimed, "If my tog Schneider vas here he vould recognize me!" and that instantly there were any number of people eager to identify him?

He laughed and said:

"No, it is not true, but it ought to be. It is too good to be disproved. Oh, who is it," he continued, "that rounds out all those stories, giving them a quip and snap which the original narrator would have rejoiced to have thought of?"

"What have you in mind?" I asked.

"Why, the Dog Schneider story and the one about General Grant and myself."

"Don't tell me that is n't true!"

"Of course it is — to a certain point, but the most humorous part of it is not mine," he answered.

"Oh, then you did meet Grant?"

"Yes, and he spoke to me as we were going up in the elevator of (I think he said) the Equitable Building. He greeted me by name, and we exchanged a few commonplaces, and then he said he did not believe I remembered him, and I had to confess I did n't, whereupon he said: 'My name is Grant.' General Grant! You can imagine how chagrined I felt on hearing the name, and I immediately made matters worse by sputtering out an apology and saying I was not accustomed to seeing him with his hat on, which was equivalent to admitting that I had only seen him when he came to the theatre to see me! Nor did I improve matters by asking him, in my confusion, where he was living, which all the world except myself knew was in New York! The story is all true as far as that, but some wit has wonderfully improved it by adding that I turned to Grant a few seconds later and said, 'By the way, General, where were you during the war?' Oh,

but that's fine," he laughed, "and it *ought* to be true."

This recalls the story of General Sherman and Mr. Jefferson. They had chatted pleasantly, and Mr. Jefferson arose to go.

"I think you must have dropped this," said Sherman, picking up some sheets of paper near the chair in which Mr. Jefferson had been sitting.

"My dear General," said Rip, "you have saved my life!"

"I am glad of that," replied Sherman, "but is n't it a little careless of you to carry such valuable papers around so loosely?"

Mr. Jefferson laughed, and opening the packet showed its contents. It was the manuscript of the first chapter of the great comedian's Autobiography.

It was while lying upon his back in the hay-loft of a barn in Pennsylvania, whither one summer he had gone from economical considerations, that the first suggestion of Rip Van Winkle came to him. He had been reading "The Life and Letters of Washington Irving." Always on the lookout for a great American

character suited to his purpose, one that he hoped would bring him fame and fortune, the mention of the name of Rip Van Winkle arrested his attention. Great was his disappointment to discover that the character of Rip did not speak above a dozen lines, and that the sketch itself presented few or no dramatic possibilities. There were to follow this first suggestion of Rip Van Winkle years of only moderate success from various publics throughout the world. Through all this his happy temperament bore him with charming placidity.

By comparison with the version of "Rip Van Winkle" made by Dion Boucicault (the changes being largely the result of Jefferson's suggestions), the earlier versions played by Thomas Flynn, Charles B. Parsons, William Chapman, James H. Hackett, Frederick Henry Yates, William Isherwood, Charles Burke (Jefferson's half-brother), and even Jefferson himself, must indeed have been much less effective.

Not in America but in England was first given the "Rip Van Winkle" in the form in which we Americans have come to know and revere our Rip Van Jefferson.

For years he carried the play about with him in its imperfect state. He was confident the character was what he wanted and equally confident the play was not, as he himself tells us in his Autobiography. He knew what it needed, but, probably from too close association, he was unable to supply it.

After a four years' sojourn in Australia he reached London. There he met Dion Boucicault, under whose management in New York in 1859 he had first played Caleb Plummer in "Dot," which was Boucicault's adaptation of "The Cricket on the Hearth."

It was not until Dion Boucicault had touched the play with the magic of his pen, supplying a dramatic element which Jefferson had vainly sought, and Jefferson had properly moulded and idealized the meeting with the ghostly crew of Hendrik Hudson, setting that meeting aside as a separate act, that Joseph Jefferson, along with the play of "Rip Van Winkle," became inseverably woven into public affection.

As an actor, Jefferson's skill and ingratiating personality were long well known and respected.

As a young comedian, Washington Irving had commended him, but the Joseph Jefferson whom we of to-day knew and loved as a great actor, came into existence with the Boucicault revised version of "Rip Van Winkle" which Jefferson brought back with him from England in 1866. From that time forward, he was Rip and Rip was he. It might be said that the play was an incident, more or less important, in the life of every other player who had performed it, but that, comparatively speaking, it was Jefferson's whole existence. After Boucicault revised it, doubtless on lines suggested by Jefferson, it was never necessary for Jefferson to play anything else. He varied his performances, it is true, with Caleb Plummer, Bob Acres, Dr. Pangloss, Dr. Ollapod, and Golightly, but most of all he played Rip Van Winkle, Boucicault's revised Rip Van Winkle, Jefferson's own skilfully developed and revised version of Boucicault's revision of Rip Van Winkle. Ever a fertile actor in the upbuilding of a scene, a genius in fact in this respect, much that Boucicault did acted as a spur, a suggestion, to Jefferson, who, as we are told on good authority, so developed the play that Boucicault himself, ever

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AS "RIP VAN WINKLE"

From a photograph, Copyright 1894 by B. J. Falk

[redacted]

sceptical of the play's worth, was astonished and greatly impressed thereby.

I count it one of the privileges of my life to have heard Joseph Jefferson with kindling eye describe the September night in '65, when, at the Adelphi Theatre in London, an American comedian in an American play, "Rip Van Winkle," began a theatrical engagement which lasted for one hundred and seventy nights.

Somehow, though different in many aspects, it recalled the first London performance of "Shylock" by Edmund Kean, when that unknown genius flashed comet-like and with startling effect across the English dramatic sky.

Jefferson could see indeed what the London success meant for him, not only in England, but in America, whither, after an absence of five years, he wended his way, and where, in New York just a year later, at the Olympic Theatre, he gave his fellow countrymen an opportunity to renew their acquaintanceship with that amiable vagabond, Rip, in a perfected dramatic form.

He never tired of talking of "Rip Van Winkle" and he loved everything connected with it.

"Why should n't I?" he would exclaim; "see

how much I owe to it!" He was too modest ever to obtrude the subject upon anyone, but he never dodged it. It seemed to me that he was grateful for any allusion to it or discussion of it. Frequently he would close a letter with an allusion to it, as:

"I will be in New York early in May, where I hope to see you. In the meantime on the road producing my latest novelty, Rip Van Winkle, as I find the public still blind to my dramatic defects."

He never lost an opportunity to come to its defence or to the defence of the stage.

"I suppose you have read Mr. Zangwill's foolish attack on the stage," he writes, October 15, 1889, "and my own equally feeble response. I don't think that either side is seriously hurt, so 'all 's well that Zangs well.' I see that some gentleman in the 'Herald' of to-day states that 'the public must not take for gospel the word of an actor who for fifty years has driven only two war-horses.' As Mrs. Malaprop says: 'What insurance! He must mean me!' I certainly may be an indifferent whip, but at least I have selected a good team ('Rip' and 'Bob'). They

speed fairly well in double harness, and in point of endurance are equal to the public.

" Think of it! What a triumph it is for artistic duplicity to have deceived the public for fifty years — and, in view of my present health, I am good, as King Henry says, 'for much more slaughter.'"

As we talked, many subjects were suggested. I wanted to know how he felt on being face to face with the oldest English-speaking theatrical public, and what he thought of the prospects of success, how the actors behaved at rehearsals, etc.

" The actors at first were inclined to be sceptical as to its chances for success," he said, " but I was so much in earnest and had my subject so well in hand that I soon won their respect, and the few inclinations to cynical comment, guying, or quizzing, which I detected, soon gave way to hearty co-operation, and I was patronizingly called by the older members of the company their 'transatlantic kid,' and heartily welcomed to the 'sacred precincts of the Royal Adelphi.'"

He was greatly concerned over a dispute between the manager of the Adelphi, Benjamin

Webster, and Dion Boucicault, who so reflected on Webster that that irascible gentleman on the eve of the production refused to allow any play in which Boucicault figured to be performed at the Adelphi. Here was an unhappy state of affairs, truly, and at a critical point in his dramatic life, when he needed above all else tranquillity! However, the matter was amicably arranged and the play given with great success.

What time he had to think calmly, between rehearsals and the Boucicault-Webster trouble, he had felt moderately sure of the outcome of the play. He believed that Boucicault had supplied the element of human interest which the previous play lacked; and, happily, his belief, his judgment, was sustained.

Of his own achievement in the evolution of "Rip Van Winkle," he was proudest of having separated the supernatural from the human interest, —giving the spectral crew of Hendrik Hudson (which in the previous versions of the play had not only spoken but sung!) an act to themselves, in which they were speechless, pantomimic, solemn, and mystical. It was a stroke of real genius by which the voice of Rip, in contradistinction

to the silence of the spectres, stood out in weird, impressive relief.

Jefferson had great admiration for Boucicault's skill in all dramatic directions. He always gladly voiced that admiration. "Dion Boucicault," I once heard him say, "has been a most important factor in my stage successes. Under him I spoke my first serious line in any play, — Caleb Plummer in 'The Cricket on the Hearth,' — and spoke it all wrong, as he soon told me. I was the first to play his Salem Scudder in 'The Octoroon,' and he added the human touch I had so long sought in Rip Van Winkle." Considering all that he, Jefferson, had gone through with the vagabond Rip, and the unshaken confidence he had maintained in the ultimate success of the bibulous hero of the Catskills, he confessed to a tinge of regret that he could not have been as clever as Boucicault, and himself supplied the elements of human interest necessary to the play's great success.

Who knows that he did not feel something of resentment against the dramatic shades of Hendrik Hudson and his sailors, those shades which, as we have seen, he had treated so considerately,

for not having whispered to him the secret of the play's requirements? I wish I had thought to ask him about it. I asked him about almost everything else! However, it would have been futile; they were nothing but spectres, and he himself had forbidden them to speak.

Not everybody has been taken captive by "Rip Van Winkle." I have seen it stated that, admitting Mr. Jefferson's skill, the material out of which he made his great reputation was unworthy. This, I think, is quarrelling not so much with Jefferson as with Washington Irving. It was argued that Rip at best was but a drunken sot who beggars his wife and children, preferring the company of his dog and the mountains to his home and family. Strange material indeed, it was said, out of which to form a hero; and, further, it was argued that the moral to be deduced from such a play was distinctly bad. Let Dame Winkle but burst into tears, overcome by her husband's selfishness and neglect, and sympathy for Rip would be instantly destroyed, it was urged. A clever actress told me that she had once endeavored so to portray Dame Winkle, but was halted in her tracks by Mr. Jefferson.

"You may be right," he said to her, "from your point of view, but I prefer it played the other way."

Jefferson in his insistence was but carrying out the clearly expressed intention of Irving, who made Rip the victim of a shrew. The lazy, good-natured, dissipated, henpecked Rip was loved by everybody in the village of Falling Water, the very dogs following him affectionately. The virago quality of Dame Van Winkle arrayed even the townspeople of her own sex against her. To laud her, then, at the expense of Rip would seem to be a misconception of the author's intention, a subversion of his ideas, and something of a failure to appreciate his satire.

It should be unnecessary to say that nothing in the story partakes more of satire than this very subject of henpecking, which is here held up so humorously for ridicule, — a henpecking ending in that outburst of pitiless scorn on the part of Dame Van Winkle, who drives the dazed and besotted Rip from the house to take refuge in the storm-wrapped mountains. When will anyone who has ever heard it forget Rip's utterance of those memorable words: "Would

you drive me out like a dog?" We all felt the worthless scamp deserved punishment, but not a heart failed to pulse sympathetically for what it felt was the unjust extent of that punishment. We knew what was to come, — that the mountain path lit only by the lightning flash, the weird, gnome-like, speechless dwarfs, and those long years of sleep which were to rob the poor fellow of his young manhood, awaited Rip, who had not even the company of Schneider to cheer him; and as the curtain fell, our silence, broken only by our sobs, was our tribute to play and player.

Jefferson was, as he himself says, attracted to the legend by its poetic quality, and he endeavored to treat it in harmony with that feature. The marvel is that out of so slight a sketch, presenting so few dramatic possibilities, a play should be constructed which for forty years should have maintained an unbroken success. With all honor to Irving for his exquisite fancy, and to Dion Boucicault for his deft dramatic carpentry, it is instantly conceded that the greatest factor in that success was Joseph Jefferson. How did he accomplish this? Aside from his genius as an actor, chiefly, I think, by the sweetness and appealing

quality of his own personality, with which in half a century nothing comparable has adorned the stage.

This attractive spirituality he imparted to everything he did in his home, in his social and professional life. Together with a mind of more than average quality, he had great delicacy of judgment, a wonderful memory, and a long experience in a world-wide school. He was wise enough to recognize the strength as well as the limitations not only of his own power, but of the requirements of his dramatic accessories.

He manœuvred thoughtfully, patiently, and adroitly for success, and having won it, he struggled with equal force to maintain it. What man need do more? He did the thing for which nature, environment, and education best fitted him. He was neither a reformer nor an educationalist. He did not, need not, concern himself with questions of æsthetic public import. He was a player in the fullest acceptance of that word, one who felt that the chief province of the theatre is to entertain and only secondarily to instruct, and as such a player, for nearly half a century, he stood foremost in his profession.

CHAPTER IV

HIS RECREATIONS

"JOE JEFFERSON is up here, drawing the worst houses you ever saw." So wrote John Sefton to his relative, Mr. Barton Hill. But the houses which Jefferson was drawing were on canvas. The comedians, Sefton and Jefferson, were summer neighbors in Paradise Valley, Pennsylvania, the valley in whose peaceful shades Jefferson first met the suggestion of Rip as a possible character for himself.

A barn was to be removed, and Jefferson objected because he thought it too picturesque to be destroyed; but if it had to go, he declared his intention of making a painting of it, and his doing so gave the facetious "Jemmy Twitcher" Sefton occasion for the jest.

Mr. Jefferson came honestly by his love of painting, for his father and grandfather had been artists with the brush as well as with the buskin.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON SKETCHING IN THE ORANGE GROVE OF CHARLES A. WALKER AT NEW IBERIA, LA.

From a photograph, Copyright 1905 by Charles A. Walker

NOT FOR LOAN

"The Siege of Belgrade," a comic opera by Cobb, was the first new production, in New York, in 1796–97. For it Mr. Jefferson's grandfather, Joseph Jefferson 1st, painted the scenery, and in it he played the character of Leopold. Mr. Jefferson's father, Joseph Jefferson 2d, who, like his illustrious son, was born in Philadelphia, was more manager than actor and more painter than either. As a boy he studied architecture and drawing, and he was also pupil to the scenic artist, Robert Coyle, an Englishman of repute at that period.

In describing the new theatre in Chicago, in 1839, when the present Western metropolis had but newly changed from an Indian village, Jefferson, in his Autobiography, says, "My father, being a scenic artist himself, was disposed to be critical"; and then follows a humorous description of the colloquy between the elder Jefferson and the resident scenic artist, but not more humorous than Jefferson's own account of the new drop-curtain with the "medallion of Shakespeare suffering from a severe pain in his stomach."

On the death of his father at Mobile, Alabama, young Jefferson and his sister were engaged by

the local manager to play children's parts, sing comic duets, and appear in fancy dances. In addition to this, he says, "I was to grind colors in the paint room, — 'assistant artist' I was called on the bills, — and make myself generally useful, for which services we were each to receive six dollars per week."

At thirteen years of age he was the chief support of a widowed mother whom misfortune had reduced "from leading lady to landlady." In reviewing the hardship of his early life, one cannot but feel how much he deserved the success which crowned his later years; nor is it to be wondered that, once achieving success, he never jeopardized it by experimenting with new plays so long as the old ones showed every evidence of popular favor. In this rough school of experience, then, where he indeed made himself "generally useful," Jefferson learned the art of acting and something of the art of painting. Acting was his profession, painting was his pastime. He had great passion for both. When he acted and especially when he did not, he painted. When he did neither, he fished. He was an ardent disciple of Izaak Walton. I have heard ex-

President Cleveland, who was often Jefferson's companion of the fly and rod, say he never saw any man get greater joy out of the sport of fishing than Joseph Jefferson, and that the mere untangling of a line seemed a philosophical pleasure to him.

Apropos of fishing, the story is told of a woman approaching Jefferson, who, comfortably clad and wearing an old sombrero, sat on the wharf at Palm Beach, watching his line. The good woman, mistaking him for a well-known character whose business it was to supply bait, asked, as she was directed:

"Are you Alligator Joe?"

"I plead guilty to 'Joe'" said Jefferson, looking up at her quizzically, "but I deny the 'Alligator.'"

I give the following, as I wrote it down at the time, bearing upon fishing and its oftentimes accompanying complaint, rheumatism:

As a member of a committee of the Actors' Fund, I was anxious to secure Jefferson to appear for the Fund Benefit, November 10 (1898). Jefferson is now in New York, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, for six weeks playing "The

Rivals." He writes me that he will not consider the idea of producing "Rip Van Winkle" at the benefit, being momentarily tired of playing the character. I called, hoping to catch him before the performance. The boys, his sons, "Tom," "Joe" and "Charley," the latter his business manager, had told me a story of the interest felt in the "Governor," as Rip is affectionately termed, by his new valet, Karl. Such a man as Karl never was before or since. His usefulness, versatility, skill, and attention are extraordinary. The "Governor," it seems, was fishing and received no nibbles and was becoming restive. The lynx-eyed Karl saw this, and immediately set about to relieve the strain of monotonous waiting. He stealthily threw some small stones now on this and then on that side of the line of the ardent angler, who, mistaking the plashing for fish, cast about in great activity. "The boys" enjoyed this joke on the "Governor," but for Karl's sake they refrained from making it known to the victim. They told it to me while I waited in the dressing-room for the coming of the septuagenarian Acres; and feeling certain of its reception, and

to the astonishment of the boys, I told it to Jefferson soon after his arrival. As I thought, he relished it hugely.

"Why should n't he throw stones?" was his exclamation; "he would throw his life away for me, then why not throw out a few pebbles? I 'll plague him about it, though, to-night."

Then he went on to tell me about the faithful, wonderful Karl, — how he had been rubbing Rip's leg for rheumatism, presumably caught lying out o' nights in the Catskills, and how, much to Karl's chagrin, he had declared the leg was getting worse.

"But, Francis," said he, "I have an old-fashioned remedy which will drive Karl to despair, but will also drive away the rheumatism."

And fishing down into his old-fashioned, capacious trousers' pocket, he pulled up a huge new potato.

"In three weeks this potato will be soft, but not rotten, and—" And then he went on to explain the various stages through which the potato would pass until the cure was effected.

He could not decide what he should play at the benefit, and the matter was postponed. A

day or two later I received the following from him:

"My dear Sir Francis Joseph — I mean Napoleon,[1] — Can you run in here [Fifth Avenue Theatre] this evening? I will come at seven thirty to talk over the Fund Benefit. If not, we must try to meet some time in the early part of next week. Thine,

BOB ACRES.

In strict obedience I went to the theatre at the appointed time, and found Jefferson in a brown padded Chinese smoking jacket. He was dozing in his chair, while the all-useful Karl, feather in hand, was sitting near by tickling the soles of his feet. From previous knowledge, I knew this to be a peculiar diversion of Jefferson's. He said, in explanation, that it brought the blood from his head and made him more comfortable. He had sent for me to say that instead of "Lend me Five Shillings" for the Fund Benefit, he would play the challenge scene from "The Rivals." He spoke of the Tolstoi dinner which he had

[1] In allusion to "The Little Corporal" in which I was appearing.

attended because he was afraid his friends, who had been very kind to him in the way of invitations, would think he attended dinners only when given to himself; said he knew his speech would please, because, after all the big guns had been fired, his little pop of nonsense would be relished.

"The literary chaps had come, some of them a long distance, fully primed to tell all they knew of the Russian novelist Tolstoi — while I was present to tell all I did n't know of the great man — of his powers of non-resistance — to even his mother-in-law. I told them a lot of nonsense *seriously*."

"After the fashion of Artemus Ward?"

"No, after the fashion of *Jefferson*, which, as I have told you, Ward adopted, and thanked me for when I met him in London. If you have ever seen the farce of 'A Regular Fix' — it was that Ward spoke of having seen me in at the Winter Garden — you will understand that it was that kind of serious, earnest fun that made the piece such a success."

"I saw the elder Sothern in it," I said.

"Yes, well, Sothern missed it altogether. He

was having fun with the old man in the piece, whereas the chief character is really in a regular fix, and his serious, honest efforts to disentangle himself cause all the fun."

Jefferson was not much of a Nimrod. Almost his entire leisure time was occupied by painting and fishing. Most of his reading was on art or kindred subjects, and he owned some valuable books containing autograph letters, original etchings, and drawings of distinguished painters. That he was not a "mighty hunter before the Lord" is borne out by the following story told me by the artist, E. W. Kemble, who visited him in his Louisiana home, New Iberia.

"Suitably dressed in hunting costume, we had gone out in a patent air-boat," said Mr. Kemble, "in hopes of finding some sport on the wing. Presently some birds came in view. I took deliberate aim, and missed. Mr. Jefferson caught up the gun, took equally deliberate aim, and — also missed. The attendant rowed us on in profound silence. Presently Mr. Jefferson said dryly:

"'I think I 've had enough hunting for to-day.'

MR. CLEVELAND AND MR. JEFFERSON OFF FOR A DAY'S FISHING

"I expressed myself as also quite satisfied and we headed toward the shore, which we were lucky to reach without being obliged to swim, for the air-valve of the rubber boat had become uncontrollable and when we touched land we were almost level with the water."

As is well known, former President Cleveland and Jefferson were great friends and frequent companions in fishing excursions. This mutual preference for the same sport ripened the intimacy between them and brought both men much happiness. Respect for the modesty of Mr. Cleveland forbids the statement here of much that Jefferson said of him. Mr. Cleveland's estimate of Jefferson has been given to the world. In their fishing jaunts there were rules implied and expressed. There was "the hour limit," for example. The boat once anchored remained so, no matter what fortune attended, for at least the space of an hour. Conversation might always be interrupted abruptly for good fishing, but under no circumstances, it is related, could good fishing be interrupted for conversation.

One of the best stories I ever heard in connection with Cleveland and Jefferson was that of a

visit the ex-President had paid between his two administrations to the comedian at New Iberia, Louisiana; desiring to see an ante-bellum negro cabin, Jefferson conducted him to one, a wretched affair, inhabited by an old mammy who might have been sixty or a hundred, for all one could judge. The place was without any ornament except a campaign lithograph picture of Cleveland.

"Mammy," said Jefferson, "whose picture is that?"

"I doan' know fo' sho'," was the reply, "but I think it 's John de Baptis'."

I wrote to Mr. Cleveland and asked him if he would kindly verify or disprove the story, and received the following:

TAMWORTH, N. H., Aug. 1, 1905.

. . . And now at last to come to the point of your letter; I have heard Mr. Jefferson tell the story you mention, and so I think it not only ought to be, but is, in the main, true. When I read your letter last evening, I was a little uncertain whether it was my picture the old negro had or that of some other crafty politician. My wife, who is always right — against the world — says

that she too heard the story from Mr. Jefferson's lips and that the picture was mine.

I was not present when the picture was identified, was never in New Iberia or that neighborhood with Mr. Jefferson, and have no relationship with the incident, except such as may be derived from my striking resemblance to John the Baptist, which I have always perfectly well known.

If you will eliminate the element of my personal presence, the story will be all right and you are welcome to use it, and if you think my bodily presence necessary to give juiciness to the story, put me in — but understand — the lie must be charged to your account, *not mine.*

Yours very sincerely,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

In thanking Mr. Cleveland, I wrote him that I believed the story would print better if his letter were given as an addendum, to do which I respectfully solicited his permission. To this he wrote, under date of August 10, 1905 :

". . . I am quite willing to leave my John the Baptist letter in your hands, and my reputation,

so far as it is included, to be dealt with as your judgment and friendly care may dictate. I can readily imagine the reminiscent revival of Jeffersoniana when you and the Commodore[1] and the Senator[2] foregathered. I am wondering if I could have made a contribution if I had been present. The trouble with me is that among the many things I remember, a majority of them depend for their delightful value upon the peculiar expression and manner of our dear friend, as they transpired, and these, of course, cannot be reproduced by anyone. I'll give you an instance.

"We were fishing for weakfish — called by the Buzzards Bay fishermen 'Squeteague.' He had a most exasperating habit of viciously jerking a fish after he was fairly hooked and during his struggling efforts to resist fatal persuasion boatwards. It looked to me like courting failure on the part of the fisherman to indulge in these unnecessary twitches. So on one occasion when he had a fish hooked and was enlivening the fight by terrific yanks, I said to him, 'What do you jerk him that way for?' With an expression that

[1] E. C. Benedict. [2] W. H. Crane.

THE INDEFATIGABLE FISHERMAN GROVER CLEVELAND

From a photograph by John Finley, Esq.

comprises really all there is of the story, he turned his face to me and said, 'Because he jerked me.'

"What a trivial thing this is to tell, and yet I cannot recall anything that illustrates better the quickness and drollery of his conceits."

That the true principles of democracy obtain in America, as perhaps nowhere else, is illustrated by the following incident told me by Mr. E. C. Benedict:

"Ex-President Cleveland and Jefferson were on the point of setting out to fish. Cleveland was in the small boat beside the yacht 'Oneida,' impatiently awaiting the coming of Jefferson.

"'Are you going fishing or not?' called out the despairing ex-President.

"With assumed boyish petulance Jefferson looked over the vessel's rail at the man whose countrymen had twice elected him to the presidency, and said:

"'I do not mean to stir until I have finished my story to the Commodore.'"

Comedian William H. Crane, as one of a party with Cleveland and Jefferson, recounts that the preparations for departure being nearly complete,

Jefferson set off on a discussion of telepathic influence. As he halted for a second, Mr. Cleveland interrupted with:

"That's all right — but where 's the bait?"

Jefferson was an ardent lover of nature, and, as in acting and in his appreciation of most things in life, he was attracted chiefly by the graceful, the peaceful, and the beautiful. The slow-winding river, the brawling brook, the mountain torrent, the tumbling cascade, the upland meadow, the dilapidated barn, the sheltered mill with decaying wheel with water trickling over near-by mossy rocks, the oak, the birch, and beech trees appealed to him most, were most expressive of his nature, and these he selected for presentation on his own canvases.

Other compositions such as the figure, *genre* pictures, and animals, he essayed, but gave over, because, as he said, he had not attempted them early enough and it was not easy to teach an old dog new tricks. With what boyish enthusiasm he embraced the opportunity to take up the brush and bear the palette may be seen from the following, written in January, 1897:

"Think of it, I have been twelve weeks with-

out painting, so that I am filled to the brim with mountains, trees, waterfalls, and 'cut woods,' but I shall be at it bright and early to-morrow, and woe betide my dearest friend if he comes within the circumference of my benevolent brush, for I shall spatter him from head to heel. The weather here is delightful. The roses are climbing over our veranda, and my grandson is climbing over my chair."

"I am working away at my painting, and hope shortly to do some work that will be creditable in the way of American landscape. The error of our American artists consists in too servile imitation of the foreign schools. . . . I have myself found much trouble in avoiding this, for now and then suggestions of Corot and Daubigny kept unconsciously intruding themselves — from pure admiration of their work.

"Nothing is so fatal to an artist as a tendency to servile imitation. I hope I have got rid of this bad, weak habit. No more French villages or Dutch interiors for me — there is material quite enough in the mountains of the West, the waterfalls and forests of the East, and the swamps of the South for American artists for all time to come.

Do come to us, come and see me wield the brush — and paint out in a minute the work of days."

What he termed his more serious paintings he did in Louisiana or Florida or in Massachusetts, where he had winter and summer residences. He became restless if long without a brush in his hand, and when he travelled professionally he carried an artist's outfit and daily applied himself with gleeful, almost feverish enthusiasm to "monotyping." If in the course of our pursuit we met in the same cities, as we did not infrequently, I would generally receive some such note as the following:

"We are going to do a little monotyping today at 3 P. M. at the National Theatre. Perhaps you'd like to see us at work. They'll tell you at the box office where to find us."

Or:

"We are at it again — in the front building of the theatre. Come along, don't be late."

Or, in imitation of the call for a rehearsal:

"All the artists at Three."

I find many notes made of these occasions, but one, with citations from others, will serve.

One afternoon I found him almost hid in a

BUZZARDS ROOST

From a monotype by Jefferson in the possession of Charles A Walker

many-colored calico apron, working away on pieces of tin or zinc of various sizes. After the All-Star "Rivals" trip he had a gigantic wash-wringer made, and it was a conspicuous article of furniture in his parlor at the various resting-places throughout the country. It took him only a few minutes to lay in a composition, using fingers, palette knife, rags, and often a brush — the skilful use of the knife making the birch tree which is especially characteristic of his paintings. His initials, "J. J.," were put in last, with a piece of leather. The tin containing the painting and a piece of paper were rolled together through the wringer, the paper receiving the impression. Unexpected effects were thus produced, for the composition of the painting on the tin before the rolling gave no true idea of what it would be once pressed onto the paper. This is one of its great attractions! This day he rolled the tin through the wringer in conjunction with the fluffy side of a piece of canton flannel, and the velvety, leafy effect of the trees and moss-covered rocks was excellent. It was the first effort on canton flannel.

On one occasion he lunched with President

McKinley and his wife, and I twitted him on his disloyalty to the Clevelands and said I meant to inform them. I should tell them, too, that a change of administration could make no difference in my faithfulness — beside which I had received no invitation. As he sat there painting away, smiling at my threat and chatter, with that vast apron buttoned up close under his ears and his patent leather shoes peeping out in comical contrast below, unmindful of the attendant's injunction not to drop the paint on his shoes or wipe his hands on his huge bib, — because the bib being thin the paint went through to his trousers, — he looked for all the world like a big wrinkled-faced boy who had gotten into some highly interesting mischief, unmindful of the birching that might lie at the end of it.

With a funny little pursing of the lips he told me, between dabs with the brush or rag, that he had just come back from "Mac's."

"Anything important said?" I asked.

"Nothing political, of course," he replied with comic airiness.

"Of course not," I answered, imitating him, "but was there anything said worth remember-

ing — any gem of thought displayed not by the President, of course, but by yourself?"

"No, no," he answered in his best Dr. Pangloss manner; "the conversation was general. I did n't condescend to advise the President as to the course he should pursue."

Later in the conversation he expressed pleasure that a certain estimable young actress had made so great a success in Barrie's "Little Minister."

From this began a discussion of the comparative importance of success to men and women on the stage. "Success," he said, "means much to a man. It means even more to a woman. The actress who has made a fortune is not beholden to some rascal of a husband, or to any of the crowd of men who hang about actresses' heels."

"Has n't a woman," I asked, "possessing sufficient ability to challenge the world's attention enough judgment to guide her in an important matter like a husband?"

"Not necessarily," he said. "Women, like music, are chiefly emotional, and an emotional woman has little chance as against a clever, unscrupulous man."

On an occasion similar to this, I had called upon him at New Orleans. After greeting me, he said:

"I don't give you my hand," presenting his elbow to be shaken, "because it is so dirty."

Then I observed just how besmeared he was. His face had a streak of green and yellow, and his fingers were shining with all the colors of the painter's palette. I declared him to be the neatest actor and the dirtiest painter I had ever seen, and he laughingly acknowledged that it was possibly so. I asked him if it were true that he would rather paint than act. He replied it most emphatically was. I said I could scarcely credit it, and that I believed if he were to reverse matters and were to act but a few weeks and paint for a whole season, the preference would be the other way. He answered that it might be so, but he did love to paint.

At another time Mr. Jefferson spoke of "Nat" Goodwin's imitations and their cleverness, particularly his singing of "Little Bo Peep" as various actors would sing it, — Irving, Booth, Barrett, and finally Jefferson, stopping in the middle and straying absent-mindedly from the song to a discussion on art.

"How much I should like to see it! I hear his imitation of me in the awakening scene in 'Rip' is cleverly ludicrous. As he yawns, he glances up and says: 'Gallery is a little off to-night! House about fifteen hundred, I should think.'"

Then Mr. Jefferson laughed and added seriously:

"He knows how much I like to play to a good house."

In response to a remark of mine he said:

"There have been numerous players who have infringed upon my rights as Rip. I interfered with them but once. I had bought the right to play 'Ours,' and had transferred the privilege gratis to a fellow actor for a Chicago engagement. The piece failed, unfortunately, and the actor had the temerity to play 'Rip Van Winkle' a few days before my engagement in Chicago. I sued him — but dropped it. I have always felt there was nothing in suing people for an infringement of this kind except the so-called 'sweetness of revenge,' and the man who has that finds he grasps a pretty small lump of sugar."

He showed me a photograph of himself and

his friend Judge Howland. He thought both likenesses excellent. I remarked that the projecting chin in the picture gave him a resemblance to Voltaire.

"I thought so myself," he answered, "and wondered if I were right."

"What *would* you do if you could n't paint?" I said to him, interested in his absorption in the task.

"Die, I think," he replied.

There was some talk of his playing "The Rivals" again next year. I asked him if he intended to do so.

"It 's in abeyance, it never grows old — if it is well done," he answered, the naïveté of which amused me.

"What is the greatest mental pleasure you have known? One that excited your feelings most, and upon which you look back with the keenest pleasure?"

"I find that hard to answer," he mused. "There are professional successes and domestic successes (I have been very happy in this latter respect) that are very dear to me. I have always been a very contented man whatever happened, and I think

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AND JUDGE HENRY E. HOWLAND

From a photograph by Hollinger & Co , N. Y.

I have had good reason to be. On the whole, I think the success of 'Rip Van Winkle,' which was an artistic as well as a commercial success, is the greatest pleasure I have ever known."

He painted awhile and then looked up and said:

"Irving did n't like my idea of Macbeth, you know."

"What is your idea concerning it?" I asked.

"That Macbeth is a good man at the beginning of the play. He is so wrapped about with integrity that all the efforts of the witches — not one, but three — are necessary to shake him. To hold other than that Macbeth is a man of integrity in Act I is to hold that Macbeth is a bloody murderer and that the play is a melodrama." Then, pausing to slant his head for a view of the picture, he added: "All the plays of Shakespeare illustrate some grand passion or quality, — Hamlet vacillation, Romeo and Juliet love, Shylock revenge, Coriolanus autocracy, Richard III ambition; and of the grandest of all subjects — fate, which is the theme of Macbeth — Shakespeare was too big a man to neglect to make the most. What greater subject

could there be than that of the responsibility of human beings for their actions in this life? There the individual stands face to face with God Himself. To find out what the characters are, or mean, one has only to go to the soliloquies of the poet. Mark how the characters of Richard and Macbeth are contrasted in two soliloquies on 'blood,' the first while Richard was still Gloucester, in 'Henry VI':

'*Gloucester.* See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death!
O, may such purple tears be alway shed
From those that wish the downfall of our house!'

'*Macbeth.* Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.'

The villain — the ambitious villany of Richard is here set forth in the one, and the conscience-stricken man in the other."

Another pause for an oblique observation of the canvas.

"I went with Winter to see Irving, and he tried to draw me out on the subject, but after a few remarks I declined to discuss it further,

because I thought it might seem presumptuous. With Coquelin, Crane, or yourself on the subject of comedy, yes; but with Irving, on the subject of tragedy, I thought it might be construed as discourteous."

"What were the 'few remarks' before you discontinued the discussion?" I asked him.

"Why, Irving thought Macbeth a villain from the beginning, and I pointed out that for a villain he made some very fine philosophical speeches, as, 'Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage,' etc., etc."

"Surely Irving replied to that?"

"Oh yes; he said that Macbeth had many fine speeches, but that they were intended to be satirical."

"Satirical?"

"Yes, *satirical.* I called his attention to the fact that the speeches I quoted were spoken when Macbeth *was alone.* A man does n't speak satirically to himself, — that is, he does n't deceive himself. Yes," he said on reflection, "he may do that, too, but he does n't do it intentionally. Shakespeare always makes his characters reveal

their true selves when they soliloquize, as Iago, on the departure of Roderigo:

> 'Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
> For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
> If I would time expend with such a snipe.'"

"Did Irving reply?" I interrogated.

"If he did I didn't hear him, and then I turned the subject. In his address before the College [Columbia] he didn't mention me by name, but in referring to Macbeth he said he could not conceive how certain American students of Macbeth could so mistake the character. My friends wished me to reply, but I declined, although I knew he meant me."

"Why did you refrain?" I ventured.

"Well, in the first place," he answered, "I am not a student of Shakespeare. I have not even read all his plays; but what I *have* read I have read analytically, and know as well as Mr. Irving or Mr. Anybody Else. In the next place, my defeat could not bring much glory to Irving, who was contending on his own ground, while victory for me would only bring humiliation to Irving and discourteously weaken his credit be-

fore the public. Perhaps some day I 'll write out my views on the matter and publish them."

This time he was arrayed in a full set of blue jeans and was painting away and answering my questions. I was sitting at a table opposite writing down his responses. He went on with his brush or feathers or fingers, until I had set down the words and had launched forth with more questions. He must have known I was taking notes, for he said I must not print the Irving discussion — at least, not *now*. Sometimes I read aloud what he said, and he corrected me if I had mistaken him. Like Boswell, "I know not how such whimsical ideas come into my head," but I asked him the most disconnected things, which often extracted a laugh from him and always a reply. If the question startled him, he would even put down his brushes and palette and with fingers stiff with many-colored paints would walk up and down the room, turning now and then to me to emphasize some remark.

Boswell-like, I asked him a variety of unrelated questions about his daughters, his sons, whether he meant to revive "The Rivals," why he painted with his fingers, why his hair kept so dark, how

long he had been playing "Rip Van Winkle," and the like.

He told me about his daughters, one of whom, Mrs. Farjeon, wife of the novelist, he had not seen for twenty years.

"Farjeon does n't write any more, does he?" I asked.

"Not now," he replied; "his style has gone out of fashion, I suppose. I am ashamed to say I have never read but one or two of his books."

He painted with his fingers, pieces of rag, ends of blotting paper, feathers, etc., to get the proper effects. It must not be supposed he discarded brushes; they were used to lay in the colors. When I had last seen him, in Washington, he was making birch trees on the canvas with his palette knife. This day the back-bone of a feather was used. The soft part of the same article dipped in paint and drawn across the picture, produced the branches, limbs, and leaves.

"What 's the swiftest time in which you ever painted a picture?" I asked.

"Two minutes."

"What!"

"Two minutes — for Judge Howland at a

dinner recently. He passed me his card and timed me."

"Here 's a card," I said; "do let me witness how quickly you can make one for me."

Some ink was spilled into the top of a soap-dish for him, and with a piece of blotting paper which I tore off the pad on his table, he in one minute and a half produced a little picture which he called "A Memory of the Catskills."

"Now sign your name," I said, "and say 'done in a minute and a half for Francis Wilson.'"

"No; that would be equivalent to saying, 'I did this in a minute and a half, see what a great man I am!'"

He wrote the title and his name and date, and I added the time record. He was much pleased with the picture, and as he examined it critically he declared it to be "excellent." Then sitting back in his chair, he said thoughtfully:

"Now, why can't I paint like that with the brush?" and then with great determination, "I *will*, some day!" And this man was seventy the next February!

He declared the picture had sky, mountains, valleys, trees.

"And habitation," I ventured.

"Well," answered he, "that 's as one sees it. That 's all there is to art; the artist paints suggestion and the spectator does all the rest."

He had finished and oiled his painting, "bringing out the colors" he called it, and begun to divest himself of his overalls and coat. He got interested in the discussion of what a spectator brings to a picture, when, giving a sudden twist, the blue jeans trousers being down at his heels by this time, he would have toppled over had I not caught him. In attempting to help him off with the pantaloons we became greatly entangled, clung to each other, and laughed till we were weak. I was convulsed to find that, in his abstraction and impatience, he had, boylike, twisted the jeans into almost undoable tangles.

I had brought him two of his Autobiographies for his autograph. Friends of mine who were not acquaintances of his often profited in this way. His favorite quotation for inscriptions in books was the Rip Van Winkle toast, "Here 's your good health, and your family's; may they all live long and prosper." In one volume I requested him to write something else. He

asked what he should write. I suggested that he give expression to an idea about the fleeting character of the actor's art, and of his own hopes, as I had heard him express them, of being remembered through his book of reminiscences. He thought that would be egotistical. He finally wrote:

"An actor cannot hope to live after he has made his final exit — an author may, — but?"

J. JEFFERSON.

April 4, 1898.

The discussion of minstrelsy came up, and I asked if he had had any other experience than that of Jumping Jim Crow with T. D. Rice as related in his Autobiography.

"Oh yes," he said gayly. "After my father died, his partner, McKenzie, took full charge of the company, and when minstrelsy became so popular, the craze having been inaugurated by Dumbleton, we all blacked up and did songs and dances."

"'We all' — who were 'we all'?"

"My half-brother, Charley Burke, James Wright, who was afterwards prompter at Wallack's Theatre, and myself," he answered.

"Did the ladies cork their faces?"

"Oh no."

"What songs did you sing?"

"'Lucy Long,' 'Good-night, Ladies,' and all the old melodies."

"Do you remember the words of any of them?"

"Yes; one we used to do ran: (*singing*)

'Sing, sing, darkies, sing!
Don't you hear de banjo ring?
Sing, sing, darkies, sing!
Sing fo' de white folks, sing!'"

During the delivery of the song he tossed his head and hands and went through the "business" much the same, I should say, as he did it originally. He told me once that he never forgot anything.

"I wish I could see Rip to-night," I said to him.

"How long since you have seen it?"

"Two or three years," I replied.

"Where?" he asked.

"At the Star Theatre in New York."

"Two or three years! Six or seven years!" he said.

"Is it possible that it is so long ago?"

"Why, do you know," he remarked sadly, "that 'Billy' Florence has been dead five or six years?"

"Time has a way of dashing along—"

"I should say it had, it just leaps with me," he replied. "I am amazed when I reflect that it is thirty-five years since I first played 'Rip Van Winkle,' and thirty-five years before that I was born."

Mr. Jefferson was not only an amateur painter of merit, but he was a connoisseur of art as well. He had a worthy collection of pictures which few distinguished artists at home or from abroad have failed to visit. He was especially interested in the modern Dutch School, the rise of which he predicted and in the canvases of which he invested — ultimately to his great profit. With discriminating judgment he bought Marises, Israels, Mauves, and Neuhuyses, when the pictures of these now famous men were looked upon almost as a joke or as the epitome of the so-called "Molasses School of Art." A few weeks before his death, when so weak he had to sit down to examine the canvases, he added to his

collection examples of two or three of the comparatively unknown younger men of this same school. All his life long he scented pictures destined to become masterpieces as unerringly as a retriever noses his game. Standing before the gems of the Walters Collection in Baltimore, he would point out "The Frosty Morning" by Rousseau, a "Ville d'Avray" by Corot, a Diaz here, a D'Aubigny there, as works he had seen and loved long ago, and sadly declare he could have secured them, when he was in Paris, for the price of a song.

"And why didn't you?" I asked excitedly.

"I was too poor! I was richer in judgment than I was in purse," was the rueful reply.

Narrow in nothing, much less in his art affiliations, he gathered from all schools. Of the Englishmen great in painting he had examples of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Thomas Gainsborough. Of the elder Dutch School he owned a Rembrandt; of the modern Dutch, those I have mentioned and many others, and all these were exquisite in quality and important in size. Beautiful pictures of Corot, Diaz,

Monticelli, Van Marcke, Greuze, greeted him daily from his walls.

The spirit and the poetry of the true artist resided in the bosom of the many-sided, greatly gifted man who dreamed and worked with youthful ardor, attentively listening the while for the voice of Nature to whisper her secrets of light and shade and color to him. Now he would be enthusiastic with the thought of a suggestion of confidence from her, and now temporarily dashed in spirit because that suggestion had eluded him. He longed to conquer another world, the world of the painter's art, the difficulty and elusiveness of which fascinated him. As an actor he could make his power of suggestion felt to audiences which his skill and genius had held captive for generations; why, then, could he not, as he had seen meaner spirits do readily, set that suggestive, poetical quality upon canvas? At times he was elated with the conviction that he had accomplished this, and he would say:

"I did something worth while yesterday, it came like a flash; come and see it."

But before he could be reached he had painted

it out, because the morning's judgment had disdained it. He said that if Necessity is the mother of Invention she is also the foster-mother of Art. Joseph Jefferson had artistic temperament and instinct, and might have become an artist of no common powers if Necessity had forced him to paint as she had forced him to act. How skilfully he painted dramatic pictures we all know. He began one and finished it every evening, and he wanted to paint on canvas with equal effectiveness and celerity. This he might have accomplished had he devoted the same time to the acquisition of the rudiments of the art as he had to acting, and had done this under equally skilful masters. When, as a connoisseur, he stood before a picture and when he conceived one which he sought to paint, he brought a wealth of appreciation and temperamental instinct to it, but if, as some think, he fell short of great achievement in this art, it was because he had neglected its fundamental principle, draughtsmanship. He either could not or he would not draw from life, and therefore, as it was thought, he had missed acquiring the power to give deft expression to his imagery

and poetic conceptions, which were as fair and beautiful as ever painter possessed. Though he painted landscape, he made no outdoor studies, contending that the pictures of the brain were best. In a word, he had been too much enamoured of paint, too little devoted to the pencil. He was in ardent sympathy with Nature, and his heart grew big in the presence of her glories, the impressions of which he strove to carry with him to the studio and affix upon canvas. He felt at times, I think, that his fame as an actor obscured the appreciation of his ability as a painter, and that sooner or later he would come out shiningly from the eclipse. He cited Corot as an example of a man whose recognition had been delayed, and that not until fifty years of age had a picture of the master been accepted at the Salon. He loved the story of Corot, when past fifty, regretting the sale of his first picture, because it rendered his collection incomplete. Through it all he saw something of himself, and it encouraged him to hope and labor on. If Corot reached fifty before he could sell a picture, he felt that he himself might make bold enough not only to exhibit but to sell at

seventy. He did both. His first exhibition and sale was held in Washington.[1]

The catalogue contains a likeness of Mr. Jefferson, and the Introduction runs:

"It is with sincere pleasure we send this catalogue — opening the Art Season — to our patrons and lovers of Art; the more so for the reason that to the majority it will be a surprise to meet an old friend in an avocation of which only the initiated few were aware. Joseph Jefferson, as a Painter, has a subtile charm and poetry, which are inspired in artists by qualities of heart and mind, and I am certain nobody will see this charming Exhibition without being delighted to have been brought

[1] The sale catalogue, one of which he sent me, reads:

Fisher Gallery, 529 Fifteenth St. Exhibition of 16 Oil Paintings by Joseph Jefferson. October 30th to November 10th. From 10 o'clock to 5 P. M. (Admission by Card.) Washington, D. C., 1899.

Underneath the "Joseph Jefferson" of the above he facetiously wrote: "One of the old Masters."

By designation the pictures are: 1, Early Fall; 2, Forest and Stream; 3, Solitude; 4, Rustic Bridge; 5, An Early Frost; 6, Mountain Torrent; 7, Stony Brook; 8, An Old Beech Tree; 9, Wood Cart, in Winter; 10, The Copse; 11, The Old Mill; 12, The Cañon; 13, The Mill Dam; 14, Little Falls; 15, On The Beach; 16, A Cool Spot.

into contact with the fascinating individuality of the Painter himself."

I give an extract from the "Washington Times" of October 29, 1899, which reviewed this exhibition at length:

"Many of these pictures are the work of but a few hours, and were turned off at white heat, just as Sargent produces his wonderful portraits. As a consequence they possess a certain unity of feeling, sentiment, and tone, which is very attractive. There is, beyond the color and subjective matter, something in the objective matter of these pictures as well, which strongly suggests eighteenth-century English art. There is also a distinctly picturesque quality, often powerful and dramatic, which betray long familiarity with theatrical scenery, and the school is no mean one, for no class of painters know so well as the scene-painters how to make the most of opportunity and material. There are in this collection typical old water-mills, cascades, and shady dells. The pervading colors are rich gray, greens, and the shadowy tones of wet, mossy rocks and tree trunks, with somewhere on the canvas a note of silvery gray and Delft blue. There is, too, a wonderful richness and juicy

quality in the foliage, and the old buildings have caught the green tones from the omnipresent moisture, till every canvas sings in tune, and the resulting note is something delicate and fine, that remains long and pleasantly in one's memory. These pictures are in every sense strong, mature, and individual. They need no defence. To be sure, there is not in them the minute observation and drawing one looks for in Picknell or Bolton Jones, but there is something more, — that something without which we should never have heard of Corot or George Inness. These pictures are well-bred fancies begotten of great love and a profound knowledge of Nature." [1]

[1] A year and two months later, at the same place, Mr. Jefferson had another and much larger exhibition of his pictures. It included none of the examples of the previous collection. The catalogue was more pretentious in every way than its predecessor, being larger and illustrated with a portrait of himself, a sketch as he appeared in his studio at the easel, reproductions of some of the exhibited pictures, a reprint of an article, "The Actor-Painter," from the "Boston Sunday Herald," September 29, 1900, and a criticism of the paintings from which an extract has been quoted.

The title-page ran :

Exhibition of 55 Oil Paintings, by Joseph Jefferson, at the

Mr. Jefferson had long been accustomed to the comments of friends and acquaintances on his efforts with the brush. He had been generous in the presentation of his canvases, and examples of his work hung in the Metropolitan Museum and in various art galleries and clubs throughout

Fisher Galleries, 527–529 Fifteenth Street, from December tenth to twenty-ninth, Washington, D. C., 1900.

The enumeration and titles of paintings in the catalogue were arranged thus: 1, Shady Nook; 2, Mount Washington; 3, Duck's Retreat; 4, The Bayou; 5, Near the Everglades; 6, Miller's Home; 7, The Willows; 8, Approaching Storm; 9, In the Adirondacks; 10, Evening Glow; 11, After Trout; 12, In the Mountains; 13, Night Effect; 14, Moonrise; 15, Forest and Stream; 16, After Bait; 17, Dutch Windmill; 18, Australian Coast; 19, A Brook; 20, A Sunny Spot; 21, A Wreck on Shore; 22, Early Fall; 23, Old Homestead; 24, Frosty Morning; 25, Farmer's Retreat; 26, In the Rockies; 27, Peaceful Valley; 28, The Tugboat; 29, Brook in the White Mountains; 30, The Broken Tree; 31, The Coming Tide; 32 Deserted Farm; 33, Rocky Brook; 34, Coast off New Zealand; 35, Storm in the Catskill; 36, King of the Forest; 37, On the Island of Naushon; 38, The Mill in Valley; 39, Massachusetts Bay; 40, Dove's Nest; 41, A Dangerous Crossing; 42, A Waterfall; 43, Rustic Bridge; 44, A Street in St. Augustine; 45, Mill Brook; 46, Near the Needles; 47, The Old Bridge; 48, Snow Drift; 49, The Wreck; 50, A New England Farm; 51, A Cataract; 52, The Old Road; 53, A Smoky City; 54, In the Moors; 55, Old Road in Naushon.

the country, but he had never before exhibited publicly, and public exhibition with public comment which should bring him a general and professional judgment was what he sought, albeit with as much nervousness and concern as when he faced an audience on the first night of a new engagement, — a nervousness which, to his last performance, was enough to render him exceedingly uncomfortable.

How pleased he was, then, with the reception of what he termed "these bantlings of my soul" may be gathered from the following:

PITTSBURGH, PA., Nov. 2, 1899.

You will see by the enclosed that I am no longer an amateur, but a full-fledged, rising young artist. [He was then within three months of seventy-one.]

Since my late exhibition of paintings I feel quite like a blushing debutante looking out for "notices." They refresh and rejuvenate me — unlike the newspapers on my acting of late that indulge in mournful expressions . . . I have no excuse to offer for sending you the enclosed [the original criticism already quoted from the cata-

logue of his exhibition] except my small new departure and my great vanity.

OLYMPIC THEATRE, ST. LOUIS, MO.,
Nov. 20th.

I find I have no other copy of the "Art Criticism" that I sent you. Will you kindly keep it for me?

You see they have given up the calling of me "an amateur," so I fancy I am now one of "the old masters."

I wrote him that I was going to Washington, and received the following:

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, MADISON SQUARE,
NEW YORK, Nov. 26, 1900.

The exhibition of my paintings will be postponed till the 10 of Dec.

There are, however, some of them hung now, and I enclose you a letter of introduction to Mr. V. G. Fisher, who, I am sure, will be pleased to give you a private view should you desire to see them.

I desired very much indeed to see them. He had presented me with an oil painting, "A Mem-

ory of the Kattskill," and he had given me, as a souvenir of the "Heir at Law" performance, a picture he painted in imitation of Turner which hung on the wall of the drawing-room scene in the play. When I reached Washington, I selected "The King of the Forest" as the most representative and most skilfully painted of any picture I had yet seen of "the rising young artist," and it passed speedily into my possession; nor was I greatly influenced in my purchase by the guileful remark of the dealer that as a picture painted by the hand of Shakespeare would now be of incalculable value, so, at no distant day, would be one painted by the hand of Joseph Jefferson.

He learned speedily of my new possession and telegraphed me:

"Congratulate you on having one of my best pictures. Don't tell anybody what you paid."

To this I could not resist replying:

"I won't. Am as much ashamed of it as you are."

We laughed over this when we met, and he requested that I should say nothing of it to "the boys," his sons, who are incorrigible wags. Such exchange of pleasantries was frequent.

KING OF THE FOREST

From a painting by Jefferson owned by Francis Wilson

Replying to the note apprising him of my acquisition of "The King of the Forest," he wrote a few days later:

"I am glad that you have this picture because you tell me you like it. You say that 'it speaks to you.' This is the best test in a work of art. . . . The King of the Forest is partly from nature and partly from imagination — I saw the old fellow once on the bank of a trout stream just at sunset. The glowing light as it came through the weird and tangled limbs made a strong impression on me, so the next day I fixed my memory on the canvas."

Many of the pleasantest hours passed with Mr. Jefferson were those spent in visiting picture collections, public and private. An account of one such visit as set down at the time, May 10, 1901, Boston, may serve, I think, as a fitting close to the chapter.

"Francis," said Mr. Jefferson, as we jogged along, "there are a lot of poor people to-day as the result of not following Commodore Vanderbilt's injunction: 'Never to sell what you have n't got or can't produce.'"

This was apropos of the big flurry in the stock

market during which many fortunes had been made in American securities and many lost in American bucket shops.

Then he threw back his head and laughed, and followed the motion with the explanation that a man had asked him if he had been "hit" by the "slump in stocks."

"Fancy living such a life as that!" he said, "never being able to lie down comfortably or get a good night's rest for fear of being impoverished in the morning. Fancy being glued to a stock-ticker and not being able to get away! No, sir, none of that for me. I want to fish a little, paint a little, and then act a little."

"Why, sir," I said to him, "so easily have fortunes been made recently in Wall Street that one might buy a pair of shoes down there on Thursday and wake to find them a finely equipped leather factory on Friday."

"Yes," he answered, "or buy a leather factory and wake up to find it a pair of shoes!"

"I have been laughing for days," he said, "over

'There was an old monk of Siberia
Whose days grew weary and wearier,

With a h—l of a yell
He broke through his cell
And eloped with the Lady Superior.'

So I tried my hand at it:

There was a small child of Peoria,
Who cried for Pitcher's Castoria!
The dear little dummy
Got a pain in her tummy;
They buried her up at Astoria."

"But why 'dummy'?" I asked.

"Oh, I don't know, unless it be to rhyme with 'tummy.'" Then, as we walked on a few yards, he said: "No, no! that won't do. I must get another line for that."

Arrived at our destination, we were ushered in among the artistic treasures of the place. Mr. Jefferson apologized for being a few moments behind time, because of being detained by an interview with Helen Keller.

He then gave us a description of going through a scene from "The Rivals" for Miss Keller's benefit, she following him the while with her finger on his lips. She had not only understood and repeated everything, but had explained that "Acres" had leaned over and whispered to "Sir

Lucius" in the effort to get the right letter for the beginning of one of the speeches. This he thought extraordinary — ascribing it to telepathy, thought-transference, out of which, he felt sure, wondrous things were to come.

About to leave the house, I suggested that we make choice of some one picture which we should carry off from those we had seen, — that is, give preference to some one painting we should be glad to carry off. The hostess was much taken with the idea. I selected the Dupré, and Jefferson pronounced instantly for the Israels "Child in a Dutch High-chair." This was a compliment to his own taste, for he has owned, these many years, a most important and beautiful example of that artist. He has often told me how he procured it, but he never told it better or with more enthusiasm than this morning.

A certain picture dealer, it seems, whom he visited one day, said he had a painting to show him that would knock him off his feet.

"Gad, it did, too!" said Jefferson, "for when he pushed that Israels out under the light, I was at once bitten with the desire for its possession. I inquired the price. 'Now,' he said, 'I am

PORTRAIT OF ISRAELS BY HIMSELF

(Presented to Dr. Frank Gunsaulus)

going to break your heart, — it is sold.' Then the following conversation came quickly :

"'Has the owner paid for it?'

"'No.'

"'Is he over-much pleased with it?'

"'Not especially.'

"'What did he pay for it?'

"'So much.'

"'Do you suppose you could get it for me?'

"'I could try.'

"'Do; if you succeed, I 'll give you five hundred dollars for your trouble.'

"'Well, he got it, and [with a delighted chuckle] with a little bribery and corruption, so did I.

"Without having examined the details of the painting, I called it 'The Madonna of the Cottage.' On removing the glass and the shadow-box, I found, up in one corner of the painting, in deep shadow, as a picture on the wall of the cottage, the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus, showing that I had guessed the artist's intention. This was told to Israels, who confirmed my thoughts as to the matter. I was greatly pleased."

Then, as if he saw the picture before him, he added:

"It is very beautiful. The young mother with her first babe — and, oh, the strength of the hand and arm that support the child, and the tenderness, lightness, and gentleness of the other hand with which she is bathing her boy!"

How true this is, those of us who have seen the Israels are ready to declare, though perhaps none of us has remarked, as had Mr. Jefferson, the lightness and strength of the mother's hand.

Israels and Jefferson corresponded, but never met. Jefferson sent the artist his "Autobiography," and Israels returned the compliment by sending Jefferson his book of travels, "Spain."

I had the distinction of being ambassador-extraordinary to the artist Israels, bearing a message of love from Joseph Jefferson, and I returned bearing an affectionate greeting from the master Dutch painter to the master American actor.

CHAPTER V

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AS A LECTURER

MR. JEFFERSON had unusual success as a lecturer. On the platform his sympathetic face and manner, his magnetism and rare sweetness of expression, his earnestness and conciseness of utterance, together with the enthusiasm for the subject he was treating — always the stage — made him a most attractive figure. He found himself in such demand as a platform speaker that he determined upon a professional lecturing tour; but he soon grew tired of a kind of work which allowed him far less scope than the drama afforded, though it interested him from the point of view of novelty. He confessed that he felt better when he gave up lecturing professionally, and that he had responded to the call only through courtesy.

Mr. Jefferson lectured two or three times during the All-Star "Rivals" trip; but an account,

made by me at the time, of his appearance at Buffalo, New York, May 25, 1896, for the Women's Union, at Union Hall, when his subject, as usual, was Dramatic Art, will serve chiefly as an illustration of him as a platform speaker and of his method as well as of his matter.

The chairman, Mrs. Frank Wade, said she would reverse the usual order of things and introduce the audience to Mr. Jefferson, and, turning to the distinguished player, said: "Mr. Jefferson, here are five hundred of your friends." The women attired in bright spring raiment were an animated and picturesque assembly, and Mr. Jefferson, in the beginning, did not fail to comment pleasantly upon the fact. He smiled upon his audience, and took them at once into his confidence by begging them not to be alarmed by the papers he held in his hand; they were only a few notes to which he would occasionally refer — for the audience were not to suppose that he would pay them so poor a compliment as to appear before them unprepared, trusting to such meagre thoughts as would come to him on the spur of the moment. He said:

"Preparation in my art is more necessary than

MR. JEFFERSON DELIVERING HIS ADDRESS ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE ACTORS' FUND HOME AT STATEN ISLAND

in any other. The sculptor, for example, can work with the clay, changing it many times before it is perfect, until he puts his figure into marble; the poet and the novelist may revise and rewrite carefully before they finally publish their work; the painter can change and alter his handiwork while it is under his hand until it reaches perfection; but an actor cannot rub out. His only chance is to be as perfectly and entirely sure as is possible beforehand, and once his presentation is made it is made forever. I could not, after giving a poor presentation of a character, say to my audience, 'Ladies and gentlemen, excuse me, I can do that much better, I 'll do it again!' No, the actor cannot rub out. If he disappoints his audience, he cannot go back."

Mr. Jefferson then related an incident that laughably depicted how an elaborate preparation made by himself and Mr. William Florence was of no avail. The last night of an engagement in New York in "The Rivals," Mr. Florence playing Sir Lucius O'Trigger, it was expected that there would be a recall after the final curtain had fallen, and a number of pretty speeches was prepared to be delivered by Mr. Florence and himself

in the most impromptu way. The play ended and the curtain fell, but there was no recall! Mr. Jefferson added that this was during the last engagement he and Mr. Florence played together.

"No," continued Mr. Jefferson, "the actor must not only produce, but in order to make the greatest artistic effect he must reproduce each time as if he had never produced before."

Speaking of the difference between acting and oratory:

"The actor and the orator must have good voices, a clear articulation, easy gestures, and a strong personality; and just here there comes a fork in the road. The orator must be impressive, the actor impressionable. The orator must speak only; the actor must not only talk, but he must listen — and an actor who does not know how to listen has half his art to learn — and he must also show what he is feeling as he listens. The orator never has to listen. His art is therefore so much the easier."

Speaking of genius and art, he said:

"Genius is delightful in itself, and art is the handmaid of genius. Genius may dye the hues

of the rainbow, but art catches the tints and makes them lasting."

Touching upon tragedy and comedy, Mr. Jefferson described the print of David Garrick standing between the goddesses of tragedy and comedy, leaning toward the former but with his arm thrown around the latter.

"Garrick was questioned as to his preference, and replied that whether he were well or ill, in high spirits or low, he was always equal to tragedy, but comedy was a serious business!"

As examples of the seriousness that some phases of comedy require, Mr. Jefferson gave a delightful reading of the Grave-digger in "Hamlet," also some lines of Dogberry in "Much Ado About Nothing."

Continuing, he said:

"Shakespeare wrote to illustrate some distinct passion, and each play is an illustration of this fact,—'Othello' jealousy, 'Macbeth' superstition; 'Romeo and Juliet' illustrated the passion of love, and this grand passion was frequently portrayed in different ways by different actors. Mrs. Siddons was called upon to decide between David Garrick and Sprangur Barry, which was the

better Romeo, — Garrick the passionate lover or Barry the fascinating wooer. She had played Juliet to them both. She said that when from the balcony she listened to Garrick, she was afraid that he would throw himself up at her feet, but that when she heard Barry she felt as if she must throw herself down at his." [1]

At the conclusion of the lecture Mr. Jefferson announced his willingness to be questioned by the audience, and gave a humorous description of a grave college professor once coming to the edge of the stage and asking him if he did not think the starring system a most pernicious one.

" Naturally I found that a most delicate subject to handle; but I told him that once I had considered the starring system most pernicious, but that my opinion had since changed, — that when I was in a stock company I looked upon every star as a tyrant, but since I had become a star, I regarded every stock actor as a conspirator! Moreover I told him I was not responsible for the starring system, that it was invented long before my time by the gentleman

[1] Mrs. Siddons never played Juliet to Garrick's Romeo. The remark was attributed to a fashionable woman of the hour.

by the name of William Shakespeare. He wrote all his plays for stars; they are all written to illustrate a passion around a central figure.

"The professor, however, wishing to oppose me, said: 'How about "Romeo and Juliet"?'

"'Well,' I replied, '"Romeo and Juliet" was written to illustrate the passion of love, and how can you illustrate the passion of love without having at least two stars?' And now I am ready for your questions."

The president of the Women's Union then rose and said that the officers of the Union were so often called upon for advice to young women entering professions, she would ask Mr. Jefferson his opinion of the stage as a career for women.

Mr. Jefferson replied:

"This is an oft repeated question not easily answered. I cannot but be prejudiced in my reply, for I am already four generations deep in the dramatic profession. My great-grandfather, my grandfather and grandmother, my father and mother were all actors and actresses, and in the face of this it is not likely I should say anything against my calling. I dislike to defend my own profession. I would much rather some minister

should do it while I defend his. My daughters never showed any talent for the stage, but if they had they should have acted side by side with their father." The audience greeted this remark with an especially hearty round of applause.

"Whether a woman should go on the stage depends entirely upon her motive. If she wishes to go on for amusement or to gratify her vanity, I emphatically answer, 'No!' but if she wishes to earn a living or adopt the stage because she has love and real talents for it, I say, 'Yes!' And the public should not be deprived of such. I do not claim entire virtue and purity for the stage — no profession can claim that, for they are all made up of humanity, good and bad, — but I am proud to number among my friends a host of men and women in the profession who are, I know, among the finest people in the land." Pausing for a few seconds, he added impressively:

"It depends upon the woman herself in any calling whether her life is respectable or not."

The next question, a written one, was handed up and proved to be:

"How long did you practise the waking-up

scene in 'Rip Van Winkle' before you were properly awaked?"

Mr. Jefferson could not answer this — nobody could — but he good-naturedly related the incident of his trying on his Rip wig one Sunday in London and rehearsing the waking-up scene much to the amusement of a large crowd outside, of whose inspection Mr. Jefferson was ignorant until informed by an irate landlady!

At the outset of his address Mr. Jefferson had told his audience that his appearance that afternoon was somewhat unusual. He was without the customary stage paraphernalia, without his customary accessories, and came before them simply disguised as a gentleman.

This disguise consisted of a long black Prince Albert coat, black waistcoat, which, after the Southern fashion, was fastened by one or two buttons at the bottom only, — or, mayhap, one at the top and one at the bottom, — disclosing peeps of a rather loosely starched white shirt. Gray trousers, patent leather shoes, and a turndown collar with a red and black Windsor tie, completed his costume. The tie gave him an artistic jauntiness, but scarcely corresponded with the rest of his dress.

He had his subject well in hand, and he inspired his audience with great confidence by his ease of manner as well as by his simplicity and felicity of speech. His loyalty to his profession was greatly applauded, and the people seemed to listen with breathless interest, and yet they were hushed instantly even to greater stillness as he told of being four generations deep in the dramatic profession. Now they were laughing heartily again as he narrated that the actor, unlike the author, sculptor, or painter, cannot go back, cannot say: "Ladies and gentlemen, I can do that better, I 'll do it over!" His manner as much as his words told his hearers how absurd such a proceeding would be on the part of the actor, and, as usual, hammered home the truth of the declaration. Once or twice, with open hand back of his ear, declaring his hearing not so good as it used to be, he requested some weak-voiced auditor to put his question "a little louder, please."

On April 28, 1897, Mr. Jefferson addressed the students of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. The occasion was interesting as bringing him face to face with the apprentices, the aspirants to fame in an art in which he had

achieved and reflected such distinction. The questions asked were more interesting than those at Buffalo, and one at least especially so, as putting the Dean of the Stage upon his mettle and obliging him, as he felt, to defend his alteration of Sheridan's "The Rivals." This, I think, was the first time Mr. Jefferson had met the graduates of a dramatic school. He was known to be sceptical with respect to such institutions. The only tyros of the dramatic art he had encountered and in whom he firmly believed were those of the theatre proper. It will be seen how gracefully he adapted himself to the circumstances.

Mr. Jefferson said:

"I have noticed to-day you are particularly enthusiastic, you are most liberal with your applause. Possibly you were thinking about all that fine applause you are going to receive, and a fellow feeling makes us all akin. I assure you that your applause has done me good, but at the same time given me stage fright."

Bronson Howard had introduced Jefferson, who took advantage of the fact to say complimentary things in return. Speaking of dramatists, he said:

"The author of course can be very much indebted to the actor for the development of his characters. I am told that on one occasion in Paris — I believe the first representation of 'Roland' — two characters were intended to be played as serious. They came upon the stage and, finding that they were not successful, immediately turned them into comic characters, and the hit of the play was tremendous. The author came to these actors, and said he never could be too grateful for what they had done. But what would the actor be without the author? Sometimes I suppose the audience think we do the whole thing. Once while I was watching Booth as Hamlet, a gentleman sitting alongside of me remarked that he could not see how Booth could get all those things off out of his head."

He made an exact statement of his views as to the instruction of beginners. "It is said, I believe, we cannot teach acting. Many members of my profession insist upon that. They are wrong. I do not say we can teach emotion; we cannot teach passion, wit, humor, or pathos. Who would suppose you could teach painting to one who was color blind, or modelling to one

"1812"

From a photograph by Mrs.
Roland Nickerson

By courtesy of C. A. Walker, Esq.

who had no eye for form, or literary composition to one who had no power of expressing himself on paper? Of course, one cannot be taught if there is no ability; but art, as applied to our profession, is most important. Art is the handmaid of genius, and only asks the small wage of respectful attention as modest payment for her services." He told the students that the greatest things which occurred on the stage were those that were not thought out, but happened; but he advised the most thorough preparation in case they did not happen.

"Another important point for you to bear in mind," he said to them, "is that your profession is not only one of production but also one of reproduction. A writer does not write the same book, a painter does not paint the same picture, but you have to play the same part very often — night after night — and yet play as if you never had played it before, so that yours is the art of reproduction as well as of production."

To the question "What do you consider the most important qualification for success on the stage?" he replied:

"I should select three, — sensibility, imagina-

tion, and industry: sensibility, that you may be alive to your surroundings; imagination, that you may weave that into a graceful and interesting combination; and industry, that you may lose none of the precious moments that are given us here for the development of that faculty."

"In playing a legitimate part, ought one to keep to the traditions or create a new treatment of the rôle?" was the next question. Jefferson declared this was a "home thrust."

"It depends entirely upon the actor, and upon how far he can come into the conditions required by the author, and whether he may not possibly be able to reach a better effect by bringing the parts a little to him. This question would almost seem to allude to the alteration I made of the traditional character of Acres. For many years I had been playing from the traditional standpoint. I did not believe I could represent the character in that way so well as I could in another, and I acted it in all sorts of ways until I found out what I considered most effective. You will be surprised when I tell you, and I will confess it to you here to show you whether art is not necessary, and to show you also that sometimes

the best things happen on the stage, and when they happen, it is the duty of art to stick a pin in the happening and see that it happens again. I had played the part of Acres two hundred times before I knew how to end the second act — always disappointed, always annoyed when the curtain fell. No, it was not right! And on one occasion it happened, and it *was* right. So the happening was better than all I could do, but art came to the assistance, and said, 'It must happen again.' This is such a home thrust and seemed almost intended to draw me out; so I want to vindicate myself before you for the liberties I took with Richard Brinsley Sheridan. In reading the papers, of course the critical or hypercritical dramatic critic said I had taken great liberties with Sheridan, and lately, when Mr. Goodwin played my version of it in Australia, he sent me the criticism of several of the horrible ways in which I had mutilated and defamed the sacred Sheridan. Once, when overcome and borne down by sorrow over the criticisms I had received, I opened Doran's 'History of the Stage' and came across this: 'Richard Brinsley Sheridan,' said Doran, 'took Sir John Van Brugh's five-act

comedy of "The Relapse" and altered it to a three-act comedy and called it "A Trip to Scarborough," and Richard Sheridan, knowing he would be rated by the critics for what he had done, makes his excuse by having one of the characters repeat the following lines: "It would be a pity if some of the great works of our former dramatists should become obsolete and retired from the stage, when by a little pruning they might be made interesting to the present generation until we can have writers who can give us better work." ' I, therefore, ask no further vindication for what I did to Brinsley Sheridan than his own confession of what he did for Sir John."

"How far should an actor be conscious of what he is doing?" was the next interrogation.

The gist of his reply was that if you can produce a better effect by immersing yourself into the character, it is better to produce it. This matter of whether we should feel or not feel has been gone over by Monsieur Coquelin and Mr. Irving. One, he thought, believes we should feel up to the point of real tears; the other, that we should not feel at all. "It appears they are both right and both wrong. It is a question whether

the one could produce the same effect as the other, reversing their methods."

The preceding addresses were but a modification of the one delivered by Mr. Jefferson at Yale College, April 27, 1892. In November of the same year Yale University conferred upon the player the degree of M.A. In 1895 Harvard University gave the great comedian the degree of M.A. Simpliciter. These were honors of which not only Jefferson but all who loved and respected him were proud. They served not only to distinguish Jefferson, but also to indicate as anachronistic whatever of religious intolerance existed in the community with respect to his profession. They were not conferred by these two great universities as a recognition of Jefferson's scholastic attainments, — he had none, and nobody knew that better than he, — but as a mark of appreciative distinction for his eminence and power as a player and his worth as a man. In a letter facetiously referring to these university distinctions he called my attention to the fact that M. A. was higher than B. A., and that in addressing him in future I was to remember that, after the manner of "Dr. Pangloss," he was

now Joseph Jefferson, M. A., LL. D., and A. S. S. This was an injunction which for once, at least, in the superscription of an envelope, I kept in mind.

In a copy of the Yale University address which I sent him to sign, he wrote:

"You will see that I have taken the liberty of writing in some lines that are not published [the twenty lines following: "And every tin man swears he was a tinker"]; so 'they will away again from me to you,' as the first grave-digger says."

Much of the Yale University address, or those parts not before mentioned, together with the lines Mr. Jefferson marked for insertion, are given herewith.

Mr. Jefferson began with a humorous anecdote.

"In my present condition," he said, "I feel that I strangely resemble the village boy of New Hampshire. It was proposed that in this same village a school-house should be erected. One of the Solons, who had been perhaps the oldest inhabitant, strongly opposed this barbarous introduction, and in his own simple words said: 'We don't want no book larnin' in this place. I 'm

ag'in it, my wife 's ag'in it, and we 'll both vote ag'in it, for 't ain't no account and takes a boy from his nat'ral work and chores e'en a'most as much as goin' fishin'. Why, there was a boy in this village years ago, as likely a young fellow as anybody ever stuck a knife into. What was his name now? Oh, Webster, yes, Dan'l Webster. He was a peart, snappy boy, but he got it into his head that he must have book larnin'. Well, he went up to Boston, got his book larnin', and nobody ever hearn tell on him again.'

"Now, though I resemble Daniel Webster about as little in personal appearance as I do intellectually, I still fancy that I may bear a likeness to him in this one particular instance, that after I have finished my discourse in the presence of so much 'book larnin',' nobody will ever hear of me again."

He told them that in presenting himself before them as an orator, he feared he risked whatever reputation he might have gained as an actor. The deep-laid plan, he said, to assault the august body was concocted by Professor Weir, whom he characterized as the anarchist in the matter, while he, Jefferson, was only the dynamite.

Speaking of players who have appeared on the platform, he said: "Fanny Kemble and James E. Murdoch are the only actors I can call to mind who have succeeded as readers. These exceptions are sufficiently limited to prove the rule, and for the reason that the peculiar qualities that are required in an actor are at variance with those which are desirable for an orator. Of course, there are some attributes that belong to each: voice, gesture, a fine articulation, presence, dignity, repose — all of these are necessary to both, but here is the great distinction: An orator impresses his audience by what he says to them; an actor is often most effective when he shows how he is impressed by what is said to him. No one talks back to the orator! He has it all to himself."

Following with humorous illustrations, he continued:

"I beg you will not for a moment think that I disparage oratory. On the contrary, it is a glorious gift. I only mean to draw the distinction between the rostrum and the stage."

Speaking of acting and mimicry, he said:

"Acting has been called — erroneously, I

think — one of the mimic arts. I do not think that good of any kind is displayed by mimicry. It is generally conceded that imitators are seldom fine actors, though they are usually great favorites with the public."

He illustrated this with the anecdote of the elder Buckstone, the English comedian listening impatiently to an imitation of himself. The whole table was in a roar of merriment; every one was in ecstasy except Buckstone, who looked the picture of misery.

"'Well, Mr. Buckstone,' exclaimed a wag who was quietly enjoying the comedian's discomfiture, 'don't you think the imitation very fine?'

"'It may be,' he replied, 'but I think I could do it better myself.'

"Acting," Jefferson went on to state, "is more a gift than an art. I have seen a child impress an audience by its natural grace and magnetism. The little creature was too young to know what art meant, but it had the gift of acting. The great value of art, when applied to the stage, is that it enables the performer to reproduce the gift, and so move his audience night after night, even though he has acted the same charac-

ter a thousand times. In fact, we cannot act a character too often if we do not lose interest in it; but when its constant repetition palls on the actor, it will as surely weary his audience. When you lose interest, stop acting." Here he cited the story of Macready, who had fallen into a perfunctory method of playing, being set right again by the sage observation of Mrs. Warner the actress.

"When I heard that story from Mr. Couldock," Jefferson goes on to say, "it struck me with much force. I knew then that I had been unconsciously falling into the same error, and I felt that the fault would increase rather than diminish with time if I could not hit upon some method to check it. I began to listen to each important question as though it had been given me for the first time, turning the query over in my mind and then answering it, even at times hesitating as if for want of words to frame the reply. I will admit that this is dangerous ground and apt to render one slow and prosy. In fact, I was accused, and I dare say quite justly, of pausing too long. This, of course, was the other extreme and had to be looked to, so that it became

necessary that the pauses should, by the manner and pantomime, be made sufficiently interesting not to weary an audience. So I summed it up somewhat after the advice of Mr. Lewes, — to take time without appearing to take time. The value of repose he declared to be so great that it was difficult to estimate it. 'To do nothing on the stage seemed quite simple, but some people,' he said, 'never acquired this power.'"

He cited his reply to the following question, which had recently been asked him:

"Do you consider the stage in a better condition now than it was formerly, — say from one to two hundred years ago?"

"I replied that I thought the question was leading me a long way back," he said, "and that though I might with justice lay claim to a lengthy dramatic experience, the date mentioned was rather before my time. But if I am to reason from my knowledge and engraft it on the history of the past, I would unhesitatingly declare that the stage is in a much better condition now than it ever was before. The social and moral status of the whole world has undoubtedly improved, and gone hand in hand with scientific and material progress; and

permit me to assure you that the stage in this respect has not been idle, but that, to my knowledge, it has in the march of improvement kept pace foot by foot with every social advance.

"Even the coarse dramas of the olden time were in keeping with the conditions of the social and literary society that surrounded it. Those plays that appealed to the lowest taste were not only welcome, but demanded by the Court of Charles. Old Pepys, who lived during this time, says in his diary, 'I went last night to see a "Midsummer Night's Dream." It was a great waste of time, and I hope I shall never again be condemned to see such a poor play. Ah, give me a comedy of Ethelridge, and let us have no more of this dull, vague Shakespeare.' It was not, therefore, that there were no good plays, but that the vicious public wanted bad ones; and while rakes and unprincipled gallants and vile women were the heroes and heroines of the stage, the plays of Shakespeare had been written for a hundred years. Such lovely creatures as Rosalind, Desdemona, Beatrice, Ophelia, Imogen, Portia, and Juliet, together with their noble mates, Orlando, Benedick, Hamlet, Romeo, and a host of pure and marvel-

lous creations, were moulding on the shelves, because the managers had suffered bankruptcy for daring to produce them. Shakespeare says that the actors are 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the times.' And so the people insisted that the actors should give them an exhibition of the licentious times rather than the splendid lesson of Shakespeare. As the social world improved in its tastes, the drama followed it, — nay, in some instances has led it."

Leading up skilfully to what he called the "periodical attacks of a solemn question," he introduced the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy, and said that a female descendant of Bacon at one time went so far as to try to break into the tomb of Shakespeare with a crowbar, in hopes of finding some manuscript that would reveal the fact that her respected ancestor was the rightful heir to the fame of which Shakespeare was supposed to have robbed him. This he followed with his own rhymed version of the matter:

"Respected member of the Bar and State,
In Law and Literature profoundly great,
As you have thrust at an immortal name.
I claim the right of parrying the same.

For though I 'm neither skilled in Law nor Science,
The gauntlet you 've thrown down in bold defiance
(Espousing Bacon's cause armed cap-a-pie),
I here take up to have a tilt with thee.
You pose before me as the great 'I am,'
And flourish forth that deadly cryptogram;
That curious volume, mystic and misleading,
Co-jointly with your case of special pleading.
But I defy them both for good or ill,
And stand the champion of 'immortal Will.'
So shall my sword upon thine own impinge,
'The croaking Raven bellows forth "Revenge."'
The actor doth the Lawyer here oppose,
The sock and buskin for the woolsack goes.

Lay on, Macduff,
With all your legal stuff,
And damned be he
Who first cries, 'Hold! enough.'

Stay! Ere we come to blows with main and might,
I beg to scan the ground on which we fight.
The question's this, if I am not mistaken,
'Did Shakespeare or did Francis Bacon,
Inspired by genius and by learning too,
Compose the wondrous works we have in view
The scholar Bacon was a man of knowledge,
But inspiration is n't taught at college.
With all the varied gifts in Will's possession
The wondering world asks, 'What was his profession?'
He must have been a lawyer, says the lawyer;
He surely was a sawyer, says the sawyer;
The druggist says, of course, he was a chemist;

The skilled mechanic dubs him a machinist ;
The thoughtful sage declares him but a thinker,
And every tinman swears he was a tinker.
And so he 's claimed by every trade a factor,
Pardon, gentlemen, he was an actor.
If Bacon wrote the plays, pray tell me then
Were all the lovely sonnets from his pen ?
Did Bacon then, himself a versifier,
Resign these charming lays and not aspire
To be the author ? — put them on the shelf,
And only keep the bad ones for himself ?
The argument against us most in vogue
Is this — that William Shakespeare was a rogue,
His character assailed, his worth belied,
And every little foible magnified.
We know that William one night after dark
Went stealing deer in lonely Lucy Park.
We also know Lord Bacon oft was prone
To take another's money for his own.
Now come, deal fairly, tell me which is worse,
To poach a stag or steal another's purse ?
So, if good character 's to be the test of it,
I think that William has the best of it.
If Shakespeare was so poor a piece of stuff,
How is it Bacon trusted him enough
To throw these valued treasures at his feet
And not so much as ask for a receipt ?
Such confidence is almost a monstrosity
And speaks of unexampled generosity.
Oh, liberal Francis, tell us why we find
Pope calling thee the ' meanest of mankind.'

But now to Shakespeare let us turn, I pray,
And hear what his companions have to say.
First, then, Ben Jonson, jealous of Will's wit,
Paid tribute when his epitaph he writ.
If other proofs are wanting than Rare Ben's,
We will consult forthwith a group of friends.
Awake! Beaumont and Fletcher, Spenser, Rowe,
Arise! and tell us, for you surely know:
Was, or was not, my client the great poet?
And if he was n't don't you think you 'd know it?
These his companions, brother playwrights mind,
Could they be hoodwinked? Were they deaf or blind?
I find it stated to our bard's discredit —
And 't is the author of the Cryptogram who said it —
That Shakespeare's tastes were vulgar and besotted,
And all his family have been allotted
To herd and consort with the low and squalid;
But whence the proof to make this statement valid?
They even say his daughter could not read;
Of such a statement I can take no heed
Except to marvel at the logic of the slight:
So, if she could n't read — he could n't write?
Your proofs are too confusing, and as such
You 've only proved that you have proved too much.
The details of three hundred years ago
We can't accept, because we do not know.
The general facts we are prepared to swallow,
While unimportant trifles beat us hollow.

We know full well
That Nero was a sinner,
But we can't tell
What Nero had for dinner.

Just take my hand and come with me
To where once stood the famous mulberry tree.
Then on to Stratford Church, here take a peep
At where the 'fathers of the hamlet sleep.'
They hold the place of honor for the dead,
The family of Shakespeare at the head.
Before the altar of this sacred place
They have been given burial and grace.
Your vague traditions are but a surmise:
The proof I offer is before your eyes.

"And oh, my comrades, brothers all in Art,
Permit me just one moment to depart
From this my subject, urging you some day
To seek this sacred spot and humbly pray
That Shakespeare's rage toward us will kindly soften,
Because, you know, we've murdered him so often.
I ask this for myself, a poor comedian:
What should I do had I been a tragedian?

"I could pile up a lot of other stuff,
But I have taxed your patience quite enough;
In turning o'er the matter in my mind
This is the plain solution that I find:

"It surely is — 'whoe'er the cap may fit,' —
Conceded that these wondrous plays were writ.
So if my Shakespeare's not the very same,
It must have been another by that name."

Besides being the scene of academic honors to Mr. Jefferson, New Haven witnessed other inci-

dents in connection with him that are also worth recording. Some time before the 1892 address he had delivered a discourse to some students and had begun upon the "question box." These questions were often written upon slips of paper and dropped into a box. After the lecture proper, Mr. Jefferson, not having before seen the slips, would read and answer what they contained. On this particular occasion the following question was propounded: "What contrast do you draw between the drama of the present day and the drama in the time of Æschylus?"

Rip paused, smiled benevolently, and said deliberately, thus augmenting the effect of his final remark:

"I am aware that I am in the presence of a learned body — and I must confess that I am asked to contrast the drama of the present day with the drama in the time of a gentleman of whom until this moment I have never heard."

This seemed an extraordinary admission for a man like Jefferson to make, and the story, coming as it did from apparently authentic sources, greatly disturbed me. I wrote to Professor John F. Weir, who introduced Jefferson on the occa-

sion mentioned, and my letter brought me this reply:

"About the Æschylus jibe, the report of it was not correct. Jefferson knew the 'boys' would be likely to spring upon him, by impromptu questions, some little decoy to lure him into deep waters, especially the Sophomores, and he *pretended* not to have heard of 'an actor by the name,' and therefore could not speak from personal acquaintance, etc., etc., etc. I can't state it precisely, but to make it appear that he had never heard of Æschylus was absurd. I had warned him on the way to the hall to look out for snags, as there were those who would appreciate in their own way the chance of questioning a 'professor,' as he termed himself. He greatly enjoyed these informal talks to what he designates his 'class,' in his visits to Yale."

Evidently Jefferson took the hint from his friend Professor Weir, and refused to be lured into a technical discussion of the Greek drama.

The most casual reader of his Autobiography knows that Jefferson could not be wholly ignorant of the subject. With three others, all

"crowned with evergreen laurel wreaths," he there tells us of being cast "for the unhappy Chorus," in the Greek play of "Antigone" by Sophocles, who was the great rival and contemporary of Æschylus. He speaks of it as "this sublime tragedy of Antigone," and goes on to tell us that "some forty years previous" to the time in which he played in it, it had been freely translated and acted in Dublin at the Theatre Royal, when the audience, at the close of the play, called for the *author*.

Professor Thomas R. Lounsbury, of Yale, who was present at the first of Jefferson's addresses to the students, writes me an account of the veteran actor's nervously disturbed condition on that occasion. This nervousness was no pose of Jefferson's; on the contrary, it was a painful reality. He was thoroughly sincere in his reply to the amateur who asked him for a cure for stage scare.

"If you find one," blurted Jefferson, "I wish you would let me have it!"

Says Professor Lounsbury: "The first public lecture that Jefferson ever delivered was given here at the Yale Art School. One of the singu-

lar things connected with it was that he who from his earliest years had been accustomed to face audiences, was here almost overcome with stage fright, as he himself confessed. I suppose it was the fact of its being a new business, and speaking from a new platform, that made it hard for him to say what he wished. The audience did not notice his embarrassment, at least particularly, but he was very conscious of it himself. Professor Weir, the head of the Art School, was to introduce him. Before doing so he had to give notice of the next lecture. It so happened that it was to be delivered by Edmund Clarence Stedman. But Stedman had been taken ill and been ordered off by his physicians to the West Indies, I think. It was therefore necessary to defer his lecture to a date later than the one set down, and notice was given that all who wished to give up their tickets could receive their money back. It naturally took up some time to make these explanations, before introducing Jefferson. The delay, however, was agreeable to the frightened man. 'I wished,' he told me after the lecture, 'that Weir would never get through. I was never so much interested in Stedman in

my life, and was in hopes Weir would keep on talking about him for the next two weeks.'"

On his last appearance in New Haven he played Dr. Pangloss, that transparent old fraud of a tutor, in Coleman's "Heir at Law." There was a number of undergraduates in the audience. It was near the Christmas examinations, — a period, for no impenetrable reasons, when most collegians are assiduously applying themselves to their books.

The epilogue had been reached and, stepping forward with characteristic blandness and joviality, Mr. Jefferson, as Dr. Pangloss, asked: "Does anybody want a tutor?"

The question was so pertinent to the moment that the effect was electric, and the Yale boys cheered again and again. After the curtain had fallen they marched in a body to the hotel, where Mr. Jefferson received and addressed them.

A new theatre was to be inaugurated at Portland, Maine, September 14, 1897, and the occasion was one of festivity. This beautiful playhouse was named in honor of Joseph Jefferson, who came from Buzzards Bay to make the opening

address. I give the account of the matter as I wrote it down at the time:

Mr. Jefferson seems quite as vigorous as I have known him to be in the last five years, and his mental keenness seems to have acquired a finer edge. His hearing has grown somewhat duller and he bemoans this, for it deprives him in no small degree of the pleasure he got in going to the theatre as an auditor. He joked about it to-night, and said that while his deafness was improving, he thought his hearing grew worse. He was nervous over his prospective address to the people of Portland accepting the courtesy they had accorded him. The subject matter, he said, was all right, but the words he chose to express it did not suit him. Later in the evening I mentioned this to Speaker Thomas B. Reed, who was present. The speaker said that Mr. Jefferson's speech was most effective, and that Mr. Jefferson was entirely in error if he supposed the contrary. From where he sat, in the box on the left, he could both see and feel the effect of Mr. Jefferson's words upon the audience. There was no trace of nervousness in Mr. Jefferson once he was before the audi-

ence. "Of course not," he said, when I spoke to him about it; "I am too old a bird for that!"

I suggested that the opening strains to be heard in the dedication of such a building to public use should be "The Star-Spangled Banner," and it was given. Then Mr. Jefferson and the gentlemen who had been most prominent in the theatre's building accompanied him upon the stage. There was an address, and Mr. Jefferson was then introduced. He contrasted very graphically the difficulties and inconveniences of stage life of former years, when he was often obliged to play in barns, with the elegance and comfort of such a place of amusement as they were now met to dedicate. His appearance in Portland had been infrequent, but he remembered with great pleasure that some forty years ago he had been given a dinner there, and that the chairman on that occasion was a man for whom he knew all Maine people had an affection, — the Hon. James G. Blaine. He afterwards told me, at Mr. Wright's house, that Blaine recalled the circumstance to him and recited a greater part of the speech that he, Jefferson, had made on that occasion. Further than this, as evidence

of the retentiveness of Blaine's memory, the great Secretary had told Jefferson that he was a frequenter of Burton's old theatre in New York, and astonished Jefferson by repeating pages of the plays and farces in the repertoire of Burton's company.

Jefferson's mention of Blaine was received with applause, of course, as was also the telling delivery of the account of the young lawyer of Springfield, Illinois, who secured a remission of the prohibitive theatrical license imposed upon Jefferson's father long years ago, — of how that lawyer rose to prominence in his own State, and how he occupied many offices of trust in the nation, and that his name was Abraham Lincoln. Jefferson was proudly fond of this story and told it frequently.

Earlier, the manager, somewhat anxious for the outcome of the evening, asked me what kind of orator Mr. Jefferson was, and seemed greatly relieved when I informed him that Mr. Jefferson on such occasions, as on all others, always struck twelve.

I repeated this to Mr. Jefferson before the curtain rose, as he stood by me, bracing himself with a slight stimulant.

"Gad," he said, "I hope I'll strike that high to-night, for, to tell the truth, I am as nervous as I can be."

"I know you are," I said.

"Of course you do," he replied, "you understand the sense of responsibility."

At the collation given by Mr. Wright, when all the guests but Jefferson, Speaker Reed, and the writer had taken their departure, it was amusing, during the call of the ladies and children for autograph programs, to see the interest manifested by both Jefferson and Reed. Jefferson wanted his for his grandchildren; Reed, his for his daughter Kitty. Much fun was created by Jefferson's inability to spell Miss Wright's given name — Eleanor — and Mrs. Jefferson's nervous effort to assist him only added to his confusion. Like some other distinguished men, he had views of his own on orthography. But he was never unforgivably weak in this particular, and "Pensilvanian" is the most violent deviation I have known him to make in any of his letters to me, and apparently he could see no sense in doubling a consonant.

Speaker Reed convulsed us by narrating the

story of a dinner given him by an ostentatious individual, who thought it would be effective to begin the feast with prayer. Amid an impressive silence he glanced down the table and, selecting a serious-faced guest, requested him to invoke the divine blessing. Rising to his feet and placing his hand fan-fashion back of his ear, the guest replied:

"I know you 're talking to me because you are making motions my way, but I 'm so d——d deaf I can't understand a word you say!"

The dinner proceeded without grace!

I was instrumental in having Mr. Jefferson speak at the Chautauqua Assembly. With a single exception, no actor had ever spoken there, and I was anxious "Our Rip" should go. He gave his lecture on "The Drama" there August 15, 1901. August 26, 1901, he writes:

". . . I am glad I went to Chautauqua. It was a novel and interesting experience — thanks to you. I cannot well send you the manuscript of my Gabble, as it was 'ad lib' with the exception of a few old chestnuts — friends of the 'Auld Lang Syne' that never desert us. You know,

of course, that the most of the talk was devoted to questions regarding the Stage, and I must say that those propounded were among the most interesting I have tried to answer. I was an hour and a half on that huge platform confronted by five thousand people. . . ."

Of Mr. Jefferson's impression upon the Chautauquans, Principal George E. Vincent wrote:

"Mr. Jefferson made a great 'hit.' When I tried to slip him into the amphitheatre quietly to attend a lecture the night before his address, the audience recognized him and cheered. We gave him the Chautauqua salute at that time.

"Next day the amphitheatre was packed. Mr. Jefferson charmed everyone by his simplicity, kindliness, and humor. And he in turn was delighted by his reception. He said it was the finest audience he had ever appeared before, and the largest."

Another friend, Mr. Leon H. Vincent, wrote:

"I heard Joseph Jefferson at Chautauqua last Thursday. It was very interesting. He had an immense audience (the Amphitheatre jammed to the very edge); he told them he had never before seen so big an audience. All his points were

received with rapturous enthusiasm. He forgot twice and took his paper out of his pocket and put on his eyeglasses in order to find out what came next. It was the most naïve thing imaginable and pleased the audience hugely. No fee was arranged for, but Jefferson was to have $100 for expenses. The money was paid him, and he immediately returned it; and when I left, Scott Brown was trying to make up his mind how to get it back to him and persuade him to keep it. Joseph Jefferson has seen many audiences, but he will seldom look into such a sea of faces as the Amphitheatre contained last Thursday afternoon."

He told the story of the boy and the gun. This incident greatly pleased Rip. I have often heard him narrate it with satisfaction:

"I was at a watering-place last winter, and a gentleman sat opposite me with his little ten-year-old boy. He leaned over and whispered to the boy, and the boy looked up in surprise, and I knew what he was saying, — that the gentleman who sat opposite was the one whom he had seen in 'Rip Van Winkle.' The little boy looked at me for a moment, and then said in the

most childish and frank manner, 'Don't you remember that time when your gun fell apart?' *That* time, and it had fallen apart for *thousands* of times! I said: 'Your son has paid me the best compliment I have ever had in my life, for if I made him believe that was the first time that gun had fallen apart, I did much better than I thought I did.'"

The following questions were propounded to Mr. Jefferson at the close of his Chautauqua address, and answered by him:

"What hinders dramatic art, so beloved by a few and so pleasing to all, from taking as general a place as music has in the popular education of youth?"

"I get from that question, Why does not dramatic art occupy the same place as music now has in the popular education? First, because there is a popular prejudice against the stage; second, because it is quite as difficult to act as it is to sing. However, it is the old prejudice that has been against the stage from time immemorial, and which to a certain extent still exists, and I fancy ever will. I was talking with two Methodist ministers before I came here, and they were

telling me that they had never been to a theatre, and I do not think it was rude in me to say I thought it a great pity that they had not been. It is impossible sometimes for a minister to visit the theatre, because it puts him in an unpleasant position with his congregation; and, as a matter of good taste, although he might desire to go, I respect the minister who does not go to the theatre, through sincerity, because he respects his congregation. I cannot fail to think that the dramas of Shakespeare, and even the plays of Bulwer and Sheridan, are helpful. The finest literature in the English language is in the dramas of Shakespeare. It does seem to me that those plays should be acted, and acted often, as a fine education and entertainment. There are many actors during the last year who have presented 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Hamlet,' 'Henry V,' and other Shakespearean plays. These have been presented very well. I have had nothing to do with them, and so I can afford to praise them."

"If you had your life to live over again, would you choose the same profession?"

"Most certainly I would. If I had not been attached to my profession, I should not be acting

now, for I am still following my profession. I have no present intention of retiring from the stage. Of course I do not think an actor should inflict his imbecility upon an audience, and as soon as he finds his powers impaired, it is proper that he should retire. I only hope I shall discover my falling off before the public does, and then retire, like a well-bred dog, when he sees preparation being made for kicking him out."

"Would you advise the young to attend the theatre?"

"I would advise the young to attend the theatre and see good plays that are educational. Most of the plays of Shakespeare are historical, and as produced nowadays you see not only the scenery of the times, but the costumes of the people, their manners, language, history; so I certainly would advise them to see plays of that kind. A gentleman asked me a rather witty question recently, — if I did not think the proper play now for the youth would be the one to which a young girl could go and take her mother."

"When you are playing do you feel that you yourself are the character, or is the character apart from you, and you merely imitating?"

"It is a question whether an actor should feel the character or should not. It depends upon the peculiar temperament of the actor. A celebrated Englishman says we should feel the character, a celebrated French authority says he could not feel the emotion at all; so there you are. I have no doubt that that Englishman could not act if he did not feel, and that that Frenchman would be very inferior if he did feel; so it depends upon the temperament of the man. You remember Shakespeare's advice to the players in 'Hamlet.' I understand he means by that that no matter how you are overcome by your emotions you must take care and maintain coolness and clearness. For my own part, I like to have the heart warm and the head cool."

"Does the theatre endeavor to stimulate the higher emotions?"

"It does, and it does not. The best plays do endeavor to stimulate the highest emotions. Think of the great characters that have been presented by Shakespeare and Bulwer. Think of Romeo, Imogen, Desdemona, Portia, and I could go on and on. But of course, if you go to see some unfortunate production from France in

which domestic infelicity is made the ruling theme, you see a play which does not appeal to our highest emotions. The drama, like everything else, has its gradation and its degradation. So, in music, there are the great oratorios and the common ragtime. Unfortunately, you have only to tell the public that a play is not fit to be seen to fill the theatre. A gentleman said to me the other day, 'Don't you think that play (giving the title) ought not to be allowed to be played?' I said, 'Possibly, but how do you know?' He was dumfounded, but said, 'Oh, I saw it.' 'How often?' 'Only twice.' It was a play to which possibly a young girl could go, but could not take her mother!"

Joseph Jefferson and Edwin Booth were great friends. The tragedian frequently visited the comedian at his home at Buzzards Bay. Those who know this home of hospitality will recall two art windows separated by the main entrance, — one window bearing the lifelike presentment of William Warren as Touchstone, the other of Edwin Booth as Hamlet. It has been my privilege to talk much with Booth of Jefferson and with Jefferson of Booth.

"CROW'S NEST," JEFFERSON'S HOME AT BUZZARDS BAY

Jefferson often told me he had frankly declared to others that though he was an actor he had never read all of Shakespeare.

"How could I?" he added; "devotion to my art and to painting prevented me."

He also said that Mr. Booth, on a recent visit to him, had asserted, with much shame in his voice, that he had never read a line of Dickens's.

"Then let me read you some of the sketches of 'Boz,'" said Jefferson.

"I sat down, and then and there," added Jefferson, "read him Bardell *vs.* Pickwick, and we laughed and laughed for a long time over the master's sketches."

The tribute paid by Jefferson to Booth, whom he succeeded as President of The Players, is copied from The Players' Club Book and closes this chapter on Jefferson as a lecturer and orator:

"Founder's Night was rendered particularly interesting by the presence of Mr. Jefferson, the President, who for the first time, in the Club House, spoke to his Fellow Players in his official capacity. That portion of his remarks containing his tribute to Mr. Booth is here presented:

"'Founder's Night should be of joy unshaded

by the slightest tinge of gloom. I know this, but how can I speak to-night without a loving reference to the one whose gift we now hold, — a gift in which our children and theirs for many generations will take pride, delight, and comfort.

"'It would be a twice-told tale to rehearse the career of Edwin Booth. You are as familiar with it as I am. But there are incidents in his early life that may interest you and possibly that no one but myself could tell you.

"'An early remembrance of the stage brings before me the figure of the elder Booth. When I was but five years of age, I acted the Duke of York to his Richard III.

"'You may think it strange that I remember this circumstance; but even a child as young as I was could not have stood in the presence of this superb and magnetic actor without being indelibly impressed with the scene. His son, Edwin, was just then born. We first met when he was a handsome youth of sixteen. A lithe and graceful figure, buoyant in spirits, and with the loveliest eyes I ever looked upon. We were friends from the first, and it is a comfort for me to know that our friendship lasted nearly half a century, un-

broken by a single unpleasant act or word. His early performances upon the stage did not give much promise, and there were grave fears that he had not inherited the genius of his father. But after the death of that father young Booth's friends and the public were suddenly startled by the news from across the continent that a new star had arisen, not in the East, but in the West, and was wending its way homeward.

"'In 1853 I became the stage-manager for Henry C. Jarrett in Baltimore. That gentleman is a member of our Club and now stands before me. He one day brought a young girl who had been given to his care and placed her in mine,—a beautiful child, but fifteen years of age. Her family, a most estimable one, had met with some reverse, and she had decided to go upon the stage to relieve them from the burden of her support and possibly to contribute to the comfort of her father. This loving duty she faithfully performed. She lived in my family as the companion of my wife for three years, and during that time became one of the leading actresses of the stage. One morning I said to her: "To-morrow you are to rehearse Juliet to the Romeo

of our new and rising young tragedian." At this distance I can scarcely say whether I had or had not a premonition of the future, but I knew at the conclusion of that rehearsal that Edwin Booth and Mary Devlin would soon be man and wife; and so it came about, for at the end of the week he came to me in the green-room, with his affianced bride by the hand, and with a quaint smile they fell upon their knees in a mock-heroic manner, as though acting a scene in the play, and said, "Father, your blessing"; to which I replied in the same mock-heroic vein, extending my hands like the old Friar, "Bless you, my children!" Shortly they were married. We know that his life was filled with histrionic triumphs and domestic bereavements.

"'May I not speak here of this gift of The Players? It is comparatively easy for those who are rocked in a golden cradle and who at their birth are endowed with great wealth to dispense their bounty. I do not desire to disparage the generosity of the rich. Those of our land have done much good, are now freely dispensing their wealth, and will continue to do so; but we must remember that the fortune of Edwin was not

inherited. The walls within which we stand, the art, the library, and the comforts that surround us, represent a life of toil and travel, sleepless nights, tedious journeys, and weary work; so that when he bestowed upon us this Club it was not his wealth only, but it was himself that he gave.

"'But a few years ago he was, though rich in genius, poor in pocket. He had been wealthy, and had seen the grand dramatic structure he had reared taken from him and devastated. His reverse of fortune was from no fault of his own, but from a confiding nature. When he again, by arduous toil, accumulated wealth, one would have supposed that the thoughts of his former reverses would have startled him, and that he would have clutched his newly acquired gold and garnered it to himself, fearful lest another stroke of ill-fortune should fall upon him. But instead of making him a coward it gave him courage. It did not warp his mind or steel his heart against humanity. No sterility settled upon him. His wrongs seemed to have fertilized his generosity, and here we behold the fruit.

"'When the stranger comes here and asks us for the monument of Edwin Booth, we can say,

"Look around you." For some time past he had looked forward calmly to his dissolution. One year ago to-night, in this room and at this very hour, he said to me the memorable words: "They drink to my health to-night, Joe. When they meet again, it will be to my memory."

"'Two years ago last autumn we walked on the sea-beach together, and with a strange and prophetic kind of poetry he likened the scene to his own failing health, the falling leaves, the withered sea-weed, the dying grass upon the shore, and the ebbing tide, that was fast receding from us. He told me that he felt prepared to go, that he had forgiven his enemies and could even rejoice in their happiness. Surely this was a grand condition in which to step from this world across the threshold to the next!'"

CHAPTER VI

THE AUTHOR

"I SHALL not be remembered as an actor," said Jefferson to me one day, "much longer than a lifetime of those who see me play. After that I may be the subject of an occasional anecdote, that's all. If the memory of me lives longer, it will be because of my book." By "the book" he meant, of course, his Autobiography. This fleeting quality of his fame did not grieve Jefferson. Indeed, he often congratulated himself on the immediate applause and substantial reward he received, while the followers of other arts, as letters, painting, and sculpture, were obliged often to await the belated appreciation of posterity. He instanced Pepys pooh-poohing Shakespeare, Rembrandt starving, dying, and buried no one knows where — and the list might be drawn out indefinitely.

"The evanescent triumphs," says Tuckerman, "when compared with those of letters, painting,

and sculpture, have often been lamented. Cibber is eloquently pathetic on the subject, and Campbell has expressed the sentiment in a memorable stanza. In one respect, however, the fragility of histrionic renown is an advantage. No species of enjoyment from art has been made the theme of such glowing reminiscence. As if inspired by the very consciousness that the merit they celebrated had no permanent memorial, intelligent lovers of the drama describe in conversation and literature the traits of favorite performers and the effects they have produced, with a zest, acuteness, and enthusiasm rarely awarded to the votaries of other pursuits. What genial emphasis, even in the traditional memory of Wilks' Sir Harry Wildair, Barry's Jaffier, Quin's Falstaff, Henderson's Sir Giles, Yates' Shakespeare's Fools, Macklin's Shylock, Harry Woodworth's Captain Boabdil, Cook's McSycophant, Siddons' Lady Macbeth, and Kean's Othello! Walpole, who was an epicurean in his dramatic as in his social tastes, sighed for the incarnation in one prodigy of the voice of Mrs. Cibber, the eye of Garrick, and the soul of Mrs. Pritchard. In Cibber's eulogies upon the tragic genius of Betterton, or the inimitable

drollery of Nokes, Hunt's genial memoirs of Jack Bannister, Lamb's account of Munden's acting, Campbell's tribute to Mrs. Siddons, and Barry Cornwall's description of Kean's characters, there is a relish and earnestness seldom devoted to the limner and the bard, who, we feel, can speak best for themselves to posterity."

To this "theme of glowing reminiscence" Jefferson has added by the composition and publication of his own remembrances. This book, "The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson," is remarkable for many qualities, but especially for "the careless ease" with which it is written. As was said, by the Spectator, of Cibber's "Apology" (apology because it was an accounting of only a *fraction* of Cibber's life), no "dullard" could have composed such a work, and it shows Jefferson to be much more than the average player who sees little of interest aside from his profession. It stamps him as a many-sided man, a gentle philosopher, who, though travelling far afield, kept his eyes open and imprinted upon his memory much that it is well he afterwards recorded. What he has said may not, as did the "Apology," keep a Swift up all night, or make a Walpole

deem it worthy of immortality, but, as Mercutio says, "'T is enough, 't will serve," and serve adequately, and it merits more than that patronizing remark of Dr. Johnson, "very entertaining," which Cibber's book elicited from the "leviathan of literature." Jefferson has carried much of the charm of his personality into the work, a peculiar charm for which one seeks in vain in the delightful pages of his dramatic predecessor, the erstwhile patentee of Drury Lane and poet-laureate of England. Carlyle has said that a well-written life is almost as rare as a well-spent one. Jefferson's life, whether guided by himself or set down by his pen, meets this declaration. He lived a full, rich, finely ordered life, and he wrote a full, rich, charming autobiography, albeit he found it tedious at times to adhere to statistics. He acknowledges himself "not quite sure as to dates, and many incidents," he says, "come up before me in a confused form, while a number are traditional"; but allowing for all this, he has written one of the notable autobiographies of the time, and to those especially interested in his art and to many who are not he has given a book which, once taken up, will rarely be laid aside unread.

It is a most unusual performance for a man who until close upon his sixtieth year had written nothing of an extended nature. William Dean Howells and others are to be thanked for encouraging Jefferson to set down these reminiscences, many of which could not possibly have been told by anyone other than Jefferson, — certainly with anything approaching the authority or exceeding just his own quaint manner of giving them expression.

The son of a manager, he was, as he himself declares, "almost born in the theatre," and he had as playgrounds those two unusual accompaniments of boyhood, the stage and a graveyard. Material enough here, one would think, to quicken the youthful imagination! He came swiftly into recorded theatrical history, for in his "Records of the New York Stage," Ireland sets down, September 30, 1837, an account of Master Joseph Jefferson appearing in "A Celebrated Combat" with Master Titus. Jefferson records that he remembers the combat, and thinks Titus must also have long remembered it, as Titus almost lost a big toe in the conflict. He takes up the life of a strolling player with his parents, and journeys through the

Erie Canal to the West, amusing the captain of the boat, "The Pioneer," with "a dismal comic song entitled 'The Devil and Little Mike.'" It had twenty-five stanzas, and the captain, even before the song was half finished, expressed himself as satisfied. He goes on up through Lakes Erie, Huron, and Michigan, and tells of Indians paddling out in their canoes offering beadwork and moccasins for sale. Always happy in descriptive passages, he paints in glowing colors a sunset over the lake. He reaches Chicago when that city is little more than a camp, and tells of acting in a porkhouse in Pekin, Illinois, and of his mother's being interrupted in the singing of "Home, Sweet Home," by the scratching and squealing of pigs under the floor. At Memphis his father is obliged to turn to sign-painting. Matters brighten a little by the prospect of a permanent engagement at Mobile; but two weeks after their arrival, the father dies and the family is close upon poverty. He has memories and anecdotes here of James W. Wallack, Macready, and the elder Booth, who acted in Mobile during the season.

He goes by flatboat to New Orleans, play-

ing *en route*, using the scenes as sails and fighting stage broadsword combats to the amusement of passing vessels. He acts at the St. Charles in New Orleans; and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Anna Cora Mowatt, and James H. Hackett, father of James K., — and once the great "Rip Van Winkle" of his time and always a great "Falstaff," — are among the visiting "stars." At the end of the season he goes up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and at this juncture tells the uproariously humorous incident of his disastrous effort, on a Fourth of July occasion, to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and of the dual sympathy he and his mother found in tears. Not less humorous is the account of meeting in Mexico with the old-time actor "Pudding" Stanley, familiarly known as "Pud," now turned ranger, and, in order to raise the tide in the exchequer, of luring Stanley into a reappearance with the tempting bait of Richard III. Then comes the account of following the American army into Mexico and, obliged to abandon their Thespian efforts, of opening a coffee and cake stand in a gambling establishment rejoicing in the flamboyant title of The Grand Spanish Saloon;

it being understood between the proprietor, Jefferson, and his partner, a fellow comedian named Badger, that in the event of either Badger's or Jefferson's being killed by a stray shot from the hands of any of the attachés, the offending party was to suffer immediate dismissal. Very dainty is his account of "Metta," his half-Spanish sweetheart, with whom for lack of linguistic accomplishment he cannot communicate.

Back he goes to New Orleans, where he sees, praises, and is jealous of the rising fame of John E. Owens, resolving some day to equal that comedian. He crosses the Alleghanies in midwinter by stage-coach, is almost frozen, and reaches Philadelphia, where he is engaged by William E. Burton, and meets his friend "Tom" Glessing, the scene-painter, one of the strongest characterizations in the book. Well drawn, indeed, is his picture of the "professional borrower," and striking as well as ludicrous are his description and anecdotes of Burton. Nor does he fail in appreciation of Burton's skill as a player, after whose death Jefferson became the most conspicuous comedian in America. The quarrel of Edgar Allan Poe and Burton is set forth, and an

account given of Burton's pretentious effort in the production of the Greek play "Antigone," in which, as has been mentioned, Jefferson was one of the unhappy Chorus. He pays beautiful tribute to his half-brother Charles Burke, and gives an instructive view of the joint performances of Burton and Burke. He becomes a country manager, and is among the first persons in the world to receive a telegram. He tells us of his surprise that the world did not stand still when his name first went out in big letters. He returns swiftly to the stock as comedian-in-chief to Foster, in Philadelphia, where the equestrian drama was being given, and sings interminable songs, for which he is hooted, while the carpenters struggle to prepare the more important scenes for the flight and chase of the horses in Dick Turpin, Timour the Tartar, the Terror of the Road, etc. He feels justified in declaring the equestrian drama absurd, and that the horse and the actor refuse to unite.

Being an "old man of twenty-one," he now decides to marry, and, "with beating heart and a pair of tight-fitting boots," not forgetting his lavender suit, he leads his bride to the altar,

Barney Williams officiating as groomsman. He hungers again for country management, and allies himself with John Ellsler at Savannah and Macon. During the managerial association Sir William Don comes upon the stage and makes a chief and graphic picture in the book, — not more graphic, though, than the cameo-like picture of Julia Dean, who disappears soon after and in outlining whom Jefferson is at his literary best. This period of management is sufficiently successful to permit the purchase of a watch which subsequently stood the young comedian in good stead in time of emergency. Back he goes to the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, as stock comedian under the stage management of John Gilbert, and here he first plays Dr. Ollapod in Coleman's "Poor Gentleman," Bob Acres in Sheridan's "Rivals," and Dr. Pangloss in Coleman's "Heir-at-Law." In the last-named John Gilbert affords him material aid with the Greek and Latin names.

In 1853 he becomes stage-manager for Henry C. Jarrett at Baltimore, and plays Moses in a "star" cast of "The School for Scandal," of which the scholarly James E. Murdoch is the

hero in a program that includes J. W. Wallack, the two Placides, Edwin Adams, the beautiful Lizzie Weston, subsequently the wife of Charles J. Mathews, and Mary Devlin, the first Mrs. Edwin Booth. He was not in favor of all-star performances, believing that actors who have been central figures for years in entertainments cannot adapt themselves readily to being grouped with others in a dramatic picture. He revised this judgment, as we shall see, later on. In 1854 he becomes stage-manager for John T. Ford of Baltimore, and meets as stars Dion Boucicault, Agnes Robertson, and Edwin Forrest. Of this majestic, gifted, but irritable tragedian he gives a convincing account, and in a few pages carries him from the days of his triumph to the grave.

Now comes Jefferson's first trip to Europe, — an economical one, in which all the "swell" restaurants are ignored. He remarks upon the devotion of the French to art and their uncertain loyalty to government, instancing their *painting* over the doors and arches of the public buildings the motto of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and *carving* in stone the list of prices

to the theatres. In the gay French capital he buys coveted articles of wardrobe for the stage.

In 1857, as Dr. Pangloss, at Laura Keene's Theatre, comes his first appearance on the boards of a Broadway playhouse, a most unusual thing in those days for an American actor. Miss Keene's merits are shown, as well as her bad judgment in the selection of plays, — giving too much consideration to their literary merit. The extraordinary circumstances attending the rise of the elder Sothern are depicted, and as Asa Trenchard in Tom Taylor's "Our American Cousin," Jefferson considerably deepens the regard in which the public holds him. This determines him to launch out as a "star," which he does with "qualified success," retreating to the Winter Garden as a member of the company under William Stuart and Dion Boucicault. Here he opens in "Caleb Plummer," and notes entertainingly the speaking of his first serious words on the stage. Mrs. John Wood, Sara Stevens, and Agnes Robertson are in the cast. Here, too, is first produced "The Octoroon," in which Jefferson makes a decided success as Salem Scudder. He descants on the starring system, and notes Tyrone Power

as one of the first of these brilliant men to enjoy the advantage of plays written to fit their especial gifts. Jefferson begins to have thoughts of a play for himself, one in which he can fully make known his own powers, and then comes the reading of the "Life and Letters of Washington Irving" and the suggestion of "Rip Van Winkle."

Early in 1861 he loses his wife, and, putting three of his children at school, leaves home with his eldest son for California, going thence to Australia, appearing in "Rip Van Winkle," "The Octoroon," and "Our American Cousin." His description of the entrance into Sydney harbor, the weird skeleton dance of the natives of the interior, his acting of "The Ticket of Leave Man" to an audience of convicts, and his encounter with the old shepherd and his dog "Jack" near the blue-gum or eucalyptus forest, are among the best things in the book. Most convincing is his portraiture of Charles Kean, as the old actor sat alone in St. Kilda's Park frowning, staring, and mumbling his part. The natives throw boomerangs for them as they sit there, and later, Kean to his wife good-naturedly

makes Jefferson the butt of his pleasantry. From Australia he visits South America, and here his capable powers of description are again brought into requisition in the verbal vignettes he makes of the beautiful women of Lima, the religious drama, and the French consul at Callao. Nor must we for a moment overlook the forceful picture he draws of his frigid reception at the house of an English merchant, at Panama, in an enthusiastic endeavor to do a courtesy to a Tasmanian acquaintance. In London Boucicault supplies the necessary dramatic element to "Rip Van Winkle," the London début takes place, and Jefferson's name and fame are greatly enhanced. Here he meets "Tom" Robertson and John Brougham, is advised by Charles Reade, patted on the back by Planché, and glared at through the fierce but honest spectacles of Anthony Trollope, and here, also, poor Artemus Ward figured in a brilliant but brief career. Back to America — home — he comes, to be received with acclamation.

He again marries, in December, 1867, and after appearing in the larger cities forms a company in his own support for the smaller places, and thus, with Charles Wyndham, which he

spells Windham, becomes one of the progenitors of the "pernicious combination system," which he defends. About this time he attends the funeral of his friend George Holland and gives the name to "The Little Church Around the Corner." There are delightful pictures of William Warren, to whom he was related, and of Charles Fechter.

He returns to Europe, revisits Paris and describes the acting at the Français, deprecating the fault which the actors have of stepping outside the dramatic picture by addressing speeches directly to the audience, a defect he failed to observe at the minor theatres. Back in London, he renews his triumphs, and, in company with Browning, Kingsley, and George Augustus Sala, lunches at the Star and Garter, on the banks of the historic Thames. Browning relates the incident of Longfellow wishing to pass his umbrella to a bedrenched London cabman. Here he revels in the pictures of the great English artists, as he had in those of the great French artists. He recounts the theft of the Duchess of Devonshire painting, which took place while he was in London at this time. He plays in Scotland,

and goes thence to Ireland, where his success is limited, and the manager suggests that he give Rip a slight brogue.

In America again, he rearranges and produces with eminent success Sheridan's "Rivals." He justifies his alteration of this comedy. He shows his enjoyment of Warren's humorously adverse comment on the old comedy alteration. His tribute to Warren is touching and beautiful. There are letters here from John Howard Payne and Washington Irving, recommending Mrs. A. Drake, with whom Jefferson as a boy had acted, and whom he declares to have been the leading tragic actress of America before the advent of Charlotte Cushman. At the time of writing the Autobiography, many dead but few living actors and actresses are mentioned directly by name. Mr. Jefferson did not feel justified in naming and estimating contemporary players.

A chapter is devoted to Jefferson's theory of the art he represented, but all through the volume may be found much matter bearing upon the subject. What he has so sensibly and tersely set forth here upon the art of acting is of great moment to all students of the drama and of infinite

credit to its author. It tells of high aims and noble endeavor under circumstances of the most adverse nature, crowned at last by appreciation and success. These anecdotes have a juiciness and flavor all their own, and come to one as gratefully as a summer shower to a sun-parched lawn. These portraits of a period in dramatic history which is not too far removed seem cut in by an engraver accustomed all his life to the handling of the burin. What, for example, could be finer than the picture drawn of Edwin Forrest, — the man, the actor, a Hercules in form, handsome of face, possessing a rich, beautiful voice, under perfect control, which was capable of moving to tears or exultation — a student with high aims — allied to a temper at once childish and almost ungovernable — "having," says Jefferson, "no power of recognizing the distinction between a man who tries his best and fails and he who fails because he does not try at all."

One can see, of course, that Jefferson has a just pride in his intellectual strength, in his professional achievements, and that he is not without a full appreciation of his position and success, but by no word does he exceed the limits of a

most becoming modesty. It is true, as Jefferson said, "an actor cannot have his cake and eat it too," — that his reward is in the applause and recognition of the present, and with that he must be satisfied. For this reason must the exquisite acting of Joseph Jefferson ultimately become but a misty tradition; yet we shall still have his "Autobiography" as an indestructible memorial to the art he adored and to the art he adorned.

Jefferson was often called upon, publicly and privately, for advice upon matters respecting the stage. It was the penalty he paid for dramatic ascendancy. It seemed to him that he was always being confronted unexpectedly by some foot-passenger demanding the secret of his success. "Your secret or your life!" they seemed to say. To all who were serious in their intentions, to those whose motives were unimpugnable, he sacrificed himself and the valuable moments of his life like a true gentleman, even postponing or curtailing his "sacred nap" for the purpose. To those who approached him from mere curiosity — and they were numerous — or whose ambitions were actuated by vanity or love of display, he gave no encouragement whatever, and but

little time. However, I never knew him to be discourteous, and I have seen him when I felt indignant that he did not administer a verbal thrashing to some bore who was vulgarly exceeding all limits in an interview procured under false pretences. He seemed to stand abashed, not knowing what to say, in the presence of such impudence, and then, with perhaps an ejaculation of surprise and the remark that such things are best when soonest forgotten, the matter was apparently dismissed from his mind.

Students and lovers of the drama who are interested in the opinions of its chief exponents on the subject of their art, will not regret having their attention directed to a series of interesting letters published in December, 1892, by the "North American Review." Modjeska, Maggie Mitchell, Jefferson, Lawrence Barrett, John McCullough, and William Warren contributed the matter which made up the article entitled "Success on the Stage." What Jefferson said is, by permission of the editor of the magazine, given herewith:

"It is asked, What are the qualifications that one should possess to become a successful actor

or actress? This is a difficult question to answer. What would be the reply of a scientist if you were to ask him what were the qualifications necessary to become a successful astronomer or a great naturalist? I fancy I see the old gentleman now. He removes his spectacles, and, thoughtfully rubbing his nose, looks at the questioner as if he were a long way off. He says, 'Well, really, I — I — Dear me, will you just say that over again?' You repeat the query. 'Well,' he says, 'perhaps inborn ability may be of some service; and then, I should think that a great love, even a passion, for such a calling might be valuable; but even these advantages, and a great many more that I can't think of, will be of very little use unless they are joined to earnestness and industry.'

"Now I would say that, in addition to these qualities, to make a successful actor one must be gifted with sensibility, imagination, and personal magnetism. The art must be commenced at the foundation, or the superstructure can scarcely stand. The student should be content to enter upon the lower walks of the profession; and this is his first stumbling-block, because the lower posi-

tions are erroneously considered to be degrading. But to 'carry a banner' is necessary, and is certainly not degrading to a beginner in the art of acting. All professions require that the student shall master the drudgery of his calling. Before the astronomer makes his great discoveries, he must have learned arithmetic. The distinguished savant has mastered the elements of his specialty. The famous chemist tries the most simple experiments, and has not hesitated to soil his hands in the laboratory. This simple drudgery is the key to the dramatic profession, yet the thought of it affrights the tyro; and how natural that it should do so, for all the apparently degrading offices of other occupations are performed in private; but on the stage the personal mortification has to be borne in the full glare of the public, and, still worse, in the presence sometimes of friends and relations who have come expressly to see how 'our John' will act his part. Poor John! How inwardly, for the first time, he wishes his friends and relations were — somewhere else! He had rather the whole world had been there than that small family party, who themselves are indignant at the manager for giving their relative such a

little thing to do. And to think that this same mortification has to be repeated night after night, perhaps season after season! Do you not recognize other qualities that must now support him? Should he not have nerve and fortitude, and how seldom these are coupled with sensibility and imagination! By many failures he may learn to succeed, and thus find out what not to do rather than what to do.

"This, of course, is the darkest side of the picture; for, though the successes by persons going upon the stage without experience have been of rare occurrence, still we cannot deny that there have been several exceptions to place against the many failures. But how small is the list! If all the failures could be collected, the line would 'stretch out to crack of doom.'

"But to return to the dramatic aspirant. We all know the young man who calls after our early dinner — say about four o'clock, just as we are going to take our sacred nap — and craves our confidence. He fears his family will offer very serious objections to his entering the theatrical profession, and, of course, for their sake as well as his own, he could not think of holding a

subordinate position. It is true he has failed as a hatter, and his success in upholstery did not seem to place him in a position to be entirely punctual in the payment of his board. But he felt that he had that within him that could accomplish Hamlet. Such young persons should remember that some of the greatest actors have commenced by holding inferior positions. Many have failed year after year, and been utterly discouraged until some fortunate character has brought out the latent strength within them.

"My remarks must necessarily be general, for the value of any particular advice given to a person depends much upon that person's nature, his capabilities, and how far he has advanced.

"Some actors are inspirational and inventive; others, again, require everything to be clearly mapped out, and a thorough plan of action arranged before they begin. The greatest excellence is attained when the mechanism forms the groundwork and base of the inspiration. If they go hand in hand, a harmonious performance is sure to be the result.

"If you are unsuccessful as a poet, a painter, an architect, or even a mechanic, it is only your

work that has failed; but with the actor it does not end here: if he be condemned, it is himself that has failed. Then, too, he is present, and is the personal witness of the public's censure and his own mortification. He cannot, like the painter, rub out his work, or alter or improve it before it goes to the exhibition. The bad effect an actor has produced must stand against him. How necessary, then, that a clear and effective outline of his character should be sketched out and fully arranged before he exposes himself to this ordeal, or insults his audience by an undefined jumble of ineffective work.

"The study of gesture and elocution, if taken in homeopathic doses and with great care, may be of service; but great effects can only be produced by great feeling, and, if the feeling be true and intense, the gesture and elocution must obey it. It is safer, however, to study gesture and elocution than to study nothing. Better be pedantic and mechanical than indefinite and careless. The one at least shows a desire to please, while the other is insulting to an audience, and I don't believe that audiences ever forgive carelessness. Besides, elocution will at least assist one

in articulation, and this important adjunct is too often slighted on the stage.

"Look at an audience during a play, and you will see that many are leaning forward, with an expression on their faces as though they were hopelessly seeking for information. They seem careworn and unhappy. This despair occurs generally in the earlier scenes, when the spectators are not all in their seats, and attention is difficult because of the noise of folding-chairs, he rustle of Mr. Worth's silk dresses, the sudden desire to consult the play-bills to discover what theatre royal has lately been robbed of its artistic treasures, and, above all, the bobbing about of the late lamented Duchess of Gainsborough's irrepressible hat; for, though we are told that this graceful article forms a fine background to a lovely face, it is a bad foreground to a comedy. Now, as these difficulties are unavoidable and will occur, the actor must show his generalship and meet the foe. Instead, therefore, of beginning work in a timid, inane, and indifferent way, he should use precision, strength, articulation, and force, even beyond the requirements of the scene, in order that he may get the

confidence of the audience and, through this, their attention.

"I have given no details here, because they could not be stated in writing. The few generalities that I have written are the result of my experience, which, I daresay, will widely differ from that of others who may write on the same subject.

"To those who may wish to follow the theatrical profession and who have an earnest desire beyond the exhibition of their own vanity to study the art of acting for its sake rather than for their own, I should desire to give all the information in my power; but to those who, having nothing else to do and who desire to go upon the stage for amusement, I would give the same advice that 'Punch' did to people about to marry, — 'Don't.'"

One point humorously and pathetically touched upon by Jefferson in this article has never, to my knowledge, been mentioned before by writers on the subject, namely, the publicity which is unavoidably given to the crude, initial efforts of the beginner on the stage, "while all the degrading offices of other occupations are performed in

private." Not many people are so constituted as to be insensible to ridicule, the actor with his emotional nature less than others, and yet it is likely fewer things in life are more provocative of laughter than the first efforts of an actor. When, then, as Jefferson remarks, these personal mortifications are to be borne night after night, perhaps season after season, not only "in the full glare of the public," but, more galling still, in the patronizing, often unsympathetic, presence of one's associates, an adequate idea may be obtained of the heavy ransom success demands of the votaries of the stage.

Returning to Jefferson as an author, we may note that in 1895 the text of the play of "Rip Van Winkle" was published. The Introduction which Jefferson wrote was mainly an enlargement upon the same theme in his Autobiography.

In 1898 he also wrote the Introduction to a publication of "The Cricket on the Hearth," by Charles Dickens. He points out the story as the exceptional work of its author which, when arranged for the stage, proved satisfactory. He mentions Dickens's rare talent as an amateur actor

as naturally making the great novelist ambitious to succeed as a dramatist. The "theatrical style" of declamation in Dickens's reading is described, and Jefferson expresses satisfaction that Dickens finally secured the tangible applause he coveted. Jefferson did not say in this Introduction, as he might, that few people realize that it was likely only so prosaic a thing as a pain in the face that kept Charles Dickens from becoming an actor. For three years Dickens attended some theatre almost every night, but always, when possible, the one in which his idol, Charles Mathews, played. For five or six hours a day at home or in the fields, he practised "even such things," he says, "as walking in and out and sitting down in a chair," and he committed to memory a vast number of theatrical parts. Writing to the manager of Covent Garden, a day was appointed when Dickens's capabilities were to be tested. His sister Fanny was in the secret, and was to accompany him on the piano in songs to be sung in an "At Home" entertainment *à la* Mathews. An inflammation of the face obliged him to break the appointment, and he wrote the manager that he would resume his application next season. Soon after he made

some success in another direction, and, to quote his own words: "I had a distinction in the world of the newspaper which made me like it; began to write; gradually left off turning my thoughts that way [the stage], and never resumed the idea." In the light of what Dickens has done there can be no reason to regret. He has given the world masterpieces of fiction that are for all time. As an actor, granting him to have reached the merit of a Garrick, his creations could have been but for a generation. It is as futile to speculate upon what Dickens might have been as an actor as it is profitable to reflect upon what he became as an author. No matter what the histrionic gain — and with increased knowledge of stage technique it is possible Dickens might have touched the borderland of Shakespearean creations and easily excelled the master as an actor — we could ill afford to lose all the host of marvellous high-relief character carvings from David Copperfield down — or up — to that gentle spirit of self-abnegation, Caleb Plummer, in the stage portrayal of which Joseph Jefferson shone so illustriously.

Like many active-minded, active-moving men, Jefferson was fond of variety in his labors as well

as in his amusements. When he was not acting, painting, orating, or collecting art treasures, he occasionally "scribbled," as he called it. The lines, quoted in another chapter, on the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy are an example.

No fitter ending to this chapter could be made than by the addition of Jefferson's lines on Immortality, in which he rose, in the opinion of many, to an unusual height. It might be called his "swan song," and, along with his Autobiography, will be quoted frequently when the memory of his acting is but a tradition. Mr. E. C. Benedict, to whom we are indebted for the preservation of the lines, had the greatest difficulty in procuring a copy of them from Jefferson, and only succeeded after repeated written and oral requests. On Jefferson's death they were given publicity by Mr. Benedict, who also gave, as follows, the way in which he first heard them.

"One day last summer, when Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Cleveland were taking luncheon on board of the 'Oneida,' in Buzzards Bay, the conversation drifted to the subject of a future life. Mr. Jefferson expressed himself as very grateful

MR. JEFFERSON PLANTING THE JEFFERSON TREE AT E. C. BENEDICT'S INDIAN HARBOR HOME, CONN.

Mr. Jefferson's son Frank standing by

for having had more than his share of the joys of this life, and as being prepared to meet at any moment the common fate of all. He said he had lately been 'scribbling some doggerel' on the subject, and he recited his lines to us. I asked him for a copy of them, which he said he did not possess, but he promised to send me one. In February I reminded him of his promise, and received a signed copy of the verses, which he entitled 'Immortality.' It seems as though these lines construct a beautiful bridge between faith and reason."

IMMORTALITY

Two caterpillars crawling on a leaf
By some strange accident in contact came.
Their conversation, passing all belief,
Was that same argument, the very same,
That has been "proed and conned" from man to man,
Yea, ever since this wondrous world began.
The ugly creatures,
Deaf and dumb and blind,
Devoid of features
That adorn mankind,
Were vain enough, in dull and wordy strife,
To speculate upon a future life.
The first was optimistic, full of hope;
The second, quite dyspeptic, seemed to mope.

Said number one, "I 'm sure of our salvation."
Said number two, "I 'm sure of our damnation;
Our ugly forms alone would seal our fates
And bar our entrance through the golden gates.
Suppose that death should take us unawares,
How could we climb the golden stairs?
If maidens shun us as they pass us by,
Would angels bid us welcome in the sky?
I wonder what great crimes we have committed
That leave us so forlorn and so unpitied.
Perhaps we 've been ungrateful, unforgiving;
'T is plain to me that life 's not worth the living."
"Come, come, cheer up," the jovial worm replied,
"Let 's take a look upon the other side.
Suppose we cannot fly like moths or millers,
Are we to blame for being caterpillars?
Will that same God that doomed us crawl the earth,
A prey to every bird that 's given birth,
Forgive our captor as he eats and sings,
And damn poor us because we have not wings?
If we can't skim the air like owl or bat,
A worm will turn 'for a' that.'"
They argued through the summer; autumn nigh,
The ugly things composed themselves to die;
And so to make their funeral quite complete,
Each wrapped him in his little winding-sheet.
The tangled web encompassed them full soon,
Each for his coffin made him a cocoon.
All through the winter's chilling blast they lay
Dead to the world, aye, dead as human clay.

THE AUTHOR

Lo, Spring comes forth with all her warmth and love;
She brings sweet justice from the realms above;
She breaks the chrysalis, she resurrects the dead;
Two butterflies ascend encircling her head.
And so this emblem shall forever be
A sign of immortality.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

CHAPTER VII

"THE RIVALS" AND THE ALL-STAR PERFORMANCES

SHERIDAN declared that "The Rivals" was one of the worst plays in the language, and he would give anything if he had not written it. This declaration was made, however, years after the production of the play, when Sheridan had become great enough to look down patronizingly upon the literary efforts of his youth.

"The School for Scandal," which may be taken as the highest expression of Sheridan's dramatic genius, was also a youthful performance, both plays being written before the author had attained his twenty-sixth year. Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan, the future Member of Parliament and Treasurer of the British Navy, had every reason to be grateful to "The Rivals." Its success enabled him to avow his hitherto concealed marriage,

To Francis Wilson
JOSEPH JEFFERSON
Bob Acres.
from J Jefferson

Italy

to extricate himself from desperate financial straits, and restore himself to the good graces of his father, the actor, "Tom" Sheridan, who had almost abandoned his college-bred son as a hopeless scapegrace. The son was now propitiously started upon that brilliant career in the course of which he should become the friend of princes and one of the most admired and popular men of his time.

"The Rivals," owing to its length chiefly, and to some dissatisfaction with the cast of characters, was not at first a success. The reasons are clearly set forth by Bernard, the actor, who, passing through London, witnessed its initial performance. "It was so intolerably long and so decidedly opposed to the tastes of the day," he says, "as to draw down a censure which convinced me, on quitting the house, that it would never succeed. It must be remembered that this was the English 'age of sentiment' and Kelly and Cumberland had flooded the stage with immoral poems under the title of comedies, which took their views of life from the drawing-room exclusively and colored their characters with a nauseous French affectation. 'The Rivals' was an attempt to over-

throw this taste and to follow up the blow which Goldsmith had given in 'She Stoops to Conquer.' My recollection of the manner in which the former was received bears me out in this supposition. The audience on this occasion was composed of two parties, — those who supported the prevailing taste and those who were indifferent to it and liked nature. The consequence was that Falkland and Julia (which Sheridan had obviously introduced to conciliate the sentimentalists) were the characters most favorably received; while Sir Anthony Absolute, Acres, and Lydia were barely tolerated; and Mrs. Malaprop (as she deserved to be) was singled out for peculiar vengeance. To this character alone must be attributed the partial failure of the play. She was denounced as a rank offence against all probability (which in dramatic life is possibility), as a thing without a parallel in society, a monstrous absurdity which had originated with the author."

The play was withdrawn, condensed, recast, and then "in a few days" started on that voyage of extraordinary favor which has endured until the present day. Sheridan was grateful enough

at the time for its success, for in token of its appreciation he adapted, in forty-eight hours it is said, a two-act play called "St. Patrick's Day" for the benefit of the comedian Clinch, who in the recasting of the play had so successfully impersonated Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

But who worries over the improbability of Mrs. Malaprop with her fine "derangement of epitaphs" and her "allegory on the banks of the Nile," or who cares whether or not she had a prototype in Dogberry, to whom she cannot hold a candle? Who is disposed to quarrel with the seeming inconsistency of the fire-eating country lout of an Acres with his new-fangled oaths of "odds tabors and pipes," "odds minims and crotchets," styled by him the "oath deferential" or "sentimental swearing," or his declaration that "damns have had their day," or who cares if he bears favorable comparison with Sir Andrew Aguecheek? What matter is it if these fictional characters in this gorgeous bit of dramatic ebullition all, from Sir Anthony down to Fag and David, talk with a brilliance of wit not to be equalled by the most eloquent in real life? Does not the happy result justify it all? Is

not, as Sheridan asserts, "the scope and immediate object of a play to please a mixed assembly in representation?" And this "The Rivals" has done.

In the selection of a contrasting picture, a companion character to his Rip, Jefferson displayed a finely artistic sense. That this choice fell upon a play upon which no royalty or author's fee was to be paid was rather his good fortune than his deliberate choice.

Winter's words are best. "In reviving 'The Rivals' and appearing as Acres," he says, "he afforded refreshment to the mind; he lessened the possibility of making Rip Van Winkle tedious; he satisfied a craving for novelty on the part of his admirers; he revived a just sense of the breadth of his scope as a comedian; and, keeping pace with modern taste, he gave the public a new pleasure, a new picture in dramatic art, and a new subject for study and thought."

He did more; he excised all those stilted and questionable passages, and at least one of the parts, that of Julia, which Sheridan had regretfully inserted and retained as a conciliation to the sentimentalists of the time. By allowable

and creditable rearrangement, combination, and invention, he gave Acres an importance and a quality hitherto unknown.

We laughed with Bob, as we had done before, but, through the grace of Jefferson's genius, we also sympathized with him. The actor had bent the character to fit his peculiar powers, and this without injury to the form or detraction from the wit of the comedy, and with the addition of an appealing attribute. Emulating the example of that accomplished dramatic craftsman, Dion Boucicault, he had condensed the play's dramatic effects, infused new life, imparted a new interest, and, like Boucicault, had exposed himself to censure. As we have seen, he has defended his course valiantly and wittily, but, considering the returns that course gave us and the source of the censure, Jefferson perhaps protested overmuch. The changes Jefferson made, though somewhat more important, are precisely in line with those which, circumstances permitting, all intelligent actors, versed in the knowledge of their craft, are constantly making. The character of Acres admitted of the prominence into which he thrust it, and such changes, especially with such

a protagonist, it seems not unreasonable to suppose, Sheridan would have welcomed.

Jefferson's revised version of "The Rivals" had a great success at its first performance, in 1880, at Mrs. John Drew's Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and, as we know, took its place thereafter in Jefferson's repertoire as a worthy companion piece to "Rip Van Winkle." I once said to him:

"I have often seen you criticised adversely for omitting certain lines of Sheridan from 'The Rivals.' Why do you do it?"

"Because I cannot say them," he replied. "Because many things were not only permissible but demanded in Sheridan's time that would insult the more refined taste of the audience of to-day. For example, in 'The Rivals' Sir Lucius dictates the letter to Acres; he says: 'To prevent the confusion that might arise from our both addressing the same lady,' and Acres, according to Sheridan, confuses the lines and writes, speaking aloud, 'From our both undressing the same lady'!

"This was once spoken, but I took the liberty of substituting something less offensive and con-

MRS. JOHN DREW
as "Mrs. Malaprop"

To Francis Wilson,
[illegible]
[illegible]

from Louisa Drew

densing the piece to the form in which it is, and which I thought would make it more acceptable to the tastes of the present time. No," he continued, "you ought to say nothing on the stage you would not say in private. You would n't insult your friends in private; why should you in public?"

In the spring of 1895 a benefit performance of "The Rivals" was given at the Fifth Avenue Theatre for Jefferson's friend C. W. Couldock, the veteran actor. Besides Jefferson, a number of prominent actors were in the cast. From this performance came the idea of forming an all-star company to play the same comedy on tour for a month. This was carried into effect, after much trouble involving a great deal of negotiation. The tour began May 4, 1896, at Springfield, Mass., and ended, after thirty performances, May 30, 1896, in New York City. A special train of Pullman cars housed the company and bore it after performances to the various cities in which it was to appear. The route was as follows: May 4th, Springfield; 5th, Hartford; 6th, New Haven; 7th, New York, matinee; 7th, Brooklyn, night; 8th, Philadelphia; 9th, Balti-

more, afternoon; 9th, Washington, night; 11th, Pittsburg; 12th, Louisville; 13th, Cincinnati, matinee and night; 14th, St. Louis; 15th and 16th, Chicago, two nights and matinee; 18th, Milwaukee; 19th, Indianapolis; 20th, Grand Rapids, Mich.; 21st, Toledo, Ohio, afternoon; 21st, Detroit, night; 22d, Columbus, Ohio; 23d, Cleveland, Ohio; 25th, Buffalo; 26th, Rochester; 27th, Syracuse, afternoon; 27th, Utica, night; 28th, Albany; 29th, Boston, afternoon; 29th, Worcester, night; 30th, New York.

After all business arrangements had been made I wrote Mr. Jefferson about rehearsals, the costumes, etc., of David, and received the following reply:

1319 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans, La.,
Feb. 21, '96.

My dear Sir Francis,[1] — If as David you were to dance before the Lord or go on an illegitimate courting expedition after the Queen of Sheba, I would suggest short skirts for the first and an acrobatic get-up for the latter, but for my old friend David in "The Rivals" — pumps,

[1] My usual form of address to him was "My dear Sir Joseph."

THE RIVALS

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF

C. B. JEFFERSON AND JOSEPH BROOKS.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Sir Anthony Absolute,	William H Crane
Captain Absolute,	Robert Taber
Falkland,	Joseph Holland
Acres,	Joseph Jefferson
Sir Lucius O'Trigger,	Nat. C. Goodwin
Fag,	E. M. Holland
David,	Francis Wilson
Mrs. Malaprop,	Mrs. John Drew
Lydia Languish,	Julia Marlowe Taber
Lucy,	Fanny Rice

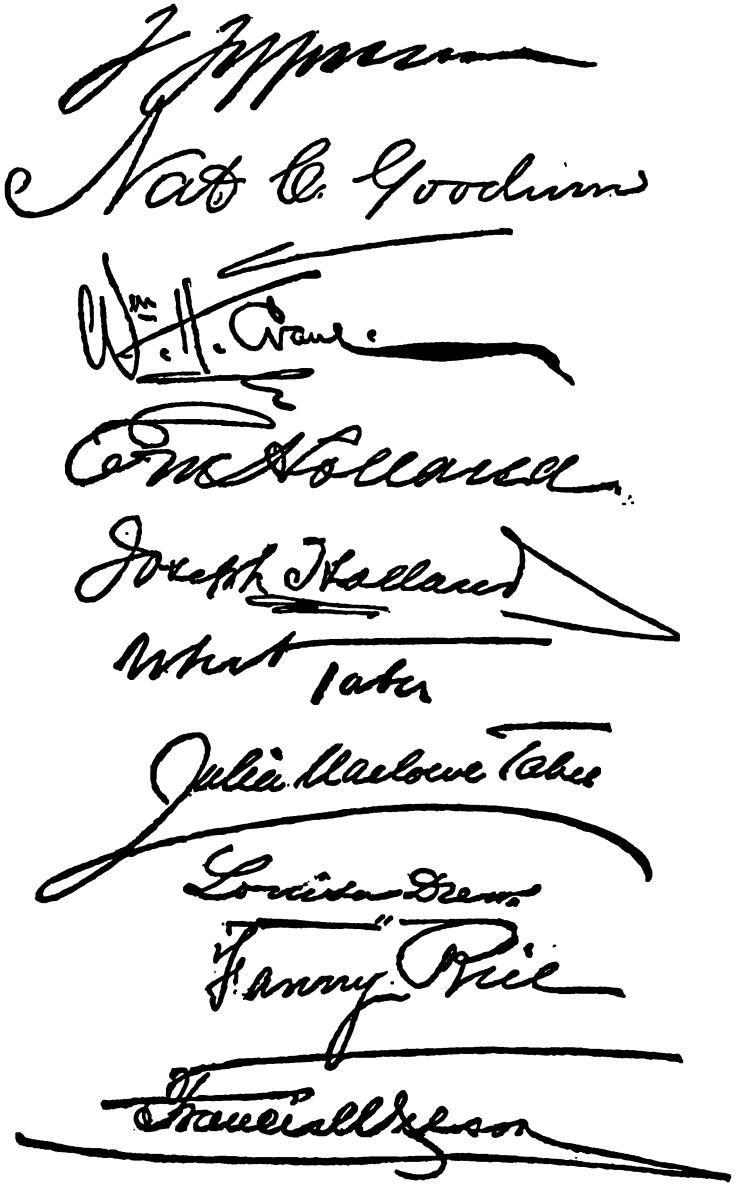
SYNOPSIS OF SCENES.

ACT I.—Scene 1—Mrs. Malaprop's Reception Room. Scene 2—Captain Absolute's Bachelor Apartments.

ACT II.—Scene 1—North Parade at Bath, showing Bath Abbey. Scene 2—Mrs. Malaprop's Reception Room. Scene 3—Apartments of Bob Acres.

ACT III.—Scene 1—Mrs. Malaprop's Apartments. Scene 2—Hallway in Mrs. Malaprop's House. Scene 3—King's Meades Fields, showing the City of Bath and Cathedral in the distance. (The celebrated Dueling grounds.

Scenery by Walter Burridge. Construction by C. L. Hagen.
Costumes by Herman.



white stockings, red plush breeches, long yellow vest, white necktie with huge bow, and a long old-fashioned square-cut livery. As for the wig, that, as Sam Weller says, "depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my lord." I would say a red or black close crop. But whatever color you choose you are sure to paint the Town red.

A little later he wrote:

BOSTON, April 29, 1896.

. . . I find it will be quite out of the question to rehearse in Springfield until Monday. If you can get here Saturday morning or afternoon, I can give you an hour or two at my hotel, the Parker House. Your photo of David is admirable. You seem to have hit the spirit of it. I predict great things for you; but *nous verrons*, as we say in Dutch. . . .

It was the honor more than the liberal emolument of the thing which, at the end of a laborious season, brought together such a company as The Rivals organization. There was an æsthetic flavor about the whole tour, a unanimity of feeling that rendered it particularly delightful. Such was the buoyancy of feeling that I am not sure that the most inefficient of us did not feel him-

self quite competent to play the most important part. However that may be, I do know that nobody felt himself too big to play the smallest part. I thought that a record of the incidents and accidents (if any), and anecdotes of the trip might prove interesting. I set them down immediately, while the impressions were fresh. They follow, with the exception of much which has been used to illustrate previous chapters, and the addition of a few which subsequent recollection made possible. A great deal that I recorded was never meant for publication, merely for my own remembrance. However, I sent the manuscript entire to Jefferson, who commended certain parts, blue-pencilled and objected to others. He felt sure that my eagerness to include all that had been said and done had made me overlook the ultimate effect that "the printed form, unaccompanied by cheerful manner and good feeling, would have upon those concerned," and that he wanted to be as frank with me as if I were at his elbow.

"My book," he writes a few days later, "gave me my first experience. I told too much. Gilder warned me. I would not hold back till I saw it in cold type, then I cried 'Peccavi!' and saw

FRANCIS WILSON.
as David

Francis Wilson

May 4. M, 1876 Springfield, Mass.

Blank

how right he was. I will read you some of 'The Rejected Addresses' when we meet, so that you can judge."

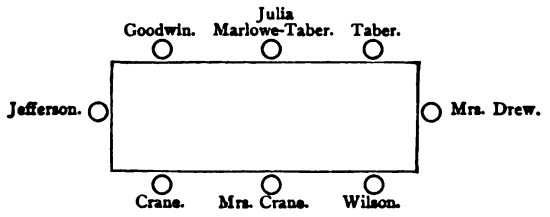
On Saturday, November 7th, he writes: "I will send you the Star Trip. I am still in my original frame of mind regarding it. It puts you in the light of a hero-worshipper and me on a theatrical throne chair with an assumed air of modesty, but slyly acquiescing in the praise. Of course I have nothing more to say, and so leave it for you to decide, except as to certain allusions. Tho' I feel at liberty to chat about or criticise an actor or actress in writing or in *conversation*, to indorse the *publication* of harsh or censurable remarks would place me justly in an unenviable position." I wrote him that I cared more for his good opinion than for the publication of twenty journals, however frankly kept, and that I had no idea that many of the things set down would pass muster with him, but that I had let them all stand for his pencil's slash or neglect, and that the whole thing had been written subject to his criticism and decision. In the journal which follows no part, of course, to which Jefferson objected is printed.

ALL-STAR RIVALS TOUR, SPRINGFIELD, MASS.,
May 3, 1896.

Came up from New York with Mrs. Drew, N. C. Goodwin, Edward Holland, Joseph Holland, Fanny Rice, and Joseph Brooks.

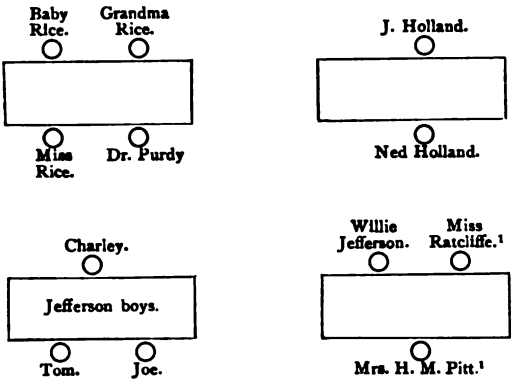
On reaching Springfield drove to the Pullman cars lying side-tracked by the river. Mr. Jefferson, Julia Marlowe-Taber, and Robert Taber were assembled in the drawing-room, dining-room, morning-room Pullman car, and the greetings over we sat down to dinner, which was excellent as to food and service. Crane and his wife are at the Massasoit House, the former indisposed with a dreadful cold and with strict injunctions from the physician to speak only in a whisper. This means torture to Crane, who is exceedingly nervous in the slightest illness, and imagines the day of judgment close at hand.

There is a large table at which we sit thus:



JOSEPH JEFFERSON AND THE FANNY RICE (PURDY) BABY
Taken on the rear platform of the car carrying the
All-Star "Rivals" Company

There are smaller tables arranged thus:



Jefferson promises to be reminiscent, Mrs. Drew dignified and corroborative, Goodwin, and no doubt Crane, anecdotal, Fanny Rice maternal, while the Tabers, Hollands, and I, though venturing an occasional leading note, shall be generally content to play the appreciative listeners who provoke the leaders to excel. To me the sweetest member of the company is Fanny Rice's baby.

Standing much in need of a general rehearsal, it was decided to go through the play in the parlor of the Massasoit House. Having arrived at the hotel, we at once paid our respects to the Cranes,

[1] Understudies.

where William was found the picture of despair. We jibed him into better humor, and saw him relax into his accustomed pleasantness of expression.

The doctor being there with sprays and laryngoscopical implements, everybody, nearly, in the company became affected with pharyngitis or larynx failure, and underwent instant treatment. The scene was wellnigh indescribable, there being a general holiday atmosphere over the whole proceeding. There were jokes and shouts of laughter as each new patient took the chair and swallowed quantities of ether, iodoform, and cocaine. The nasal inhalator was passed around, and dexterously adjusted and manipulated. There were burlesque diagnoses of the cases, some of which went pretty close to the mark. Crane was declared to have corns on his vocal cords, and Goodwin hypertrophy of the theatrical septum. Cocaine was sprayed as hair-oil, and Taber, whose pharynx was really congested, was pronounced in perfect health. High hats, sofa-pillows, Jefferson, and Mrs. Drew went through a course of unusual spraying treatment. Off in a corner of the room surreptitious glances

Wm H CRANE
as "Sir Anthony Absolute".

To Francis Wilson
with best wishes Wm H. Crane May 4th '96.

U of M

were being taken at the lines soon to be spoken in the rehearsal apartment, and one exceedingly nervous member knelt in reverence before an open book of "The Rivals" in a frantic effort to get a deeper impression of the lines he knew perfectly weeks before.

Mr. Jefferson conducted the rehearsal with an occasional valuable suggestion from Mrs. Drew, who is very firm and alert at seventy-six. Rehearsing in a small room with all one's stellar confrères huddled about one is a trying experience. There were blanched cheeks and profuse perspiration, for which even the warmth of the room did not fully account. In fact, a strong case of stage fright developed all around. Mr. Jefferson confessed himself nervous, not for himself, but for the people! It did not occur to anybody to be nervous for Mr. Jefferson. After each one had gone through his scene, he would heave a sigh of relief and escape into the hall. I felt easier as I saw them drift out about the time Acres and David were to appear, and, for fear that they would return inopportunely, I turned the key in the door, and obliged them to knock repeatedly before gaining admittance. Mr.

Jefferson, whose hearing is somewhat dull, did not for a while take in the situation.

As the rehearsal progressed, it was plain that anxiety to please and the newness of the situation were having a marked effect upon the acting of the people, Jefferson and Mrs. Drew being the only ones to do themselves justice.

The Tabers and Crane have been rehearsing all the week, but the Hollands, Fanny Rice, and I are just beginning. Goodwin has once played his rôle of Sir Lucius.

Thoroughly tired, nervously so, all reached the car after rehearsal and sat down to refreshments. The ladies have all disappeared, and the men are swapping anecdotes and relating experiences. Jefferson tells some funny things of the elder Holland. What attention is paid the talker! How he responds to it, too! At the christening of Joe Holland, Jefferson standing as godfather, and promising to bring Joe up in the Protestant faith, — a promise, he reminded Holland, he had forgotten until to-night, — the ladies of the christening party were very much overcome with the solemnity of the occasion, and Jefferson was astonished to find that Holland

père was much overcome as well. His head was in his hands, and his body swayed with apparent grief. Jefferson could not remember to have seen his old friend so moved and, placing his hand upon his shoulders, he spoke a few encouraging words. To his amazement Holland gave him a punch with his elbow, and looked up at him with a wink so wofully ridiculous that it sent Jefferson from the church in a fit of only half-concealed laughter, while Holland assumed his attitude of emotion.

It was a rare treat to hear Jefferson and Mrs. Drew talk over old times, old plays, and old friends. They were in excellent mood this morning, and I confess being strongly tempted to take out a pencil and make notes on the spot. I think I never saw two people of the stage freer from pretence and affectation. Actors and actresses, particularly those of the "old school," are prone to carry into private life something of the grand manner they have been accustomed to assume on the stage. But there is nothing of this in Jefferson and Mrs. Drew. There is, on the contrary, an alert, rather jaunty air of modernity about Jefferson which I have often observed be-

fore. It would have been quite natural for Mrs. Drew to carry into private life some of the queenly airs of the *grandes dames* and heroines of the drama, but I find no trace of it. There is dignity a plenty; and when she speaks, she does so with an air of assured but never presumptuous authority, as one who has been accustomed to command. She has a deliciously keen sense of the finest gradations of humor, and it is most interesting to watch the peculiar expression about the eyes and mouth, indicative of her thorough grasp and enjoyment of a jest. As these two royal representatives of the drama sat talking, and I contrasted their simple, unaffected manner, both of speech and action, with that of some pretentious members of the players' profession, I was reminded of the remark of a gifted artist who, when his attention was called to some students whose long hair and conspicuous dress obviously proclaimed their artistic ambitions, said: "Oh, if they only knew that art does not consist of *that!*"

Mrs. Drew declared the elder Booth an "idiosyncratic reader," — that he thrust his views too much upon an audience by undue emphasis upon

passages that reflected the *reader's* personal opinion and bias. She gave as an example Lear's lines about Cordelia:

> "Her voice was ever *soft* and *low*, —
> An *excellent* thing in woman,"

the adjectives of which, she said, he unduly exaggerated. This was confirmed by Mr. Jefferson, who declared "Booth put too much individuality into his readings."

We spoke of his (Jefferson's) Autobiography, and he asked me what had most impressed me in it.

"What an awful question to ask the man!" said Mrs. Drew. "Suppose he can't think of anything?"

But I thought of the descriptive power displayed, and which I believed unusual in a man who had excelled in another field, and Mr. Jefferson was visibly pleased at my comment. I went on to say that possibly the two most dramatic incidents in the book were his meeting with the Australian shepherd and his dog "Schneider," as I purposely misquoted, —

"Jack," instantly corrected Jefferson,

— and the performance of "The Ticket-of-

Leave Man" before an audience composed of convicts; but that nothing had amused me more than his visit to the Chinese theatre, when he had gazed into the fat and stolid countenance of the Mongolian tragedian and wondered if he had ever heard of Shakespeare. Jefferson smiled as I recalled the scene, and Mrs. Drew congratulated him on his success as a fisher for compliments. Mrs. Drew thought the account of Jefferson carrying the letter from the tearful father in South America to the unfilial daughter and her iceberg of a husband in Australia, together with the frigidity of Jefferson's reception, one of the best things in the book. Mr. Jefferson told us that the father's name was Power, and that the daughter was a niece of Lady B——.

Dickens was mentioned, and Jefferson spoke of William Warren's disappointment in Dickens as a reader. Mrs. Drew had heard him read and corroborated Warren's judgment.

"He characterized too much," she said, "by acting all the voices, thus giving the imagination no opportunity. There was no relief, — no chance for the imagination of the listener to play. The reading became monotonous."

NAT C. GOODWIN
as Sir Lucius O'Trigger

May 19/
/1896

To my old and esteemed
friend Francis Wilson
Nat C Goodwin

"On a trip to San Francisco," said Jefferson, "a number of favorable critiques of my performances in Eastern cities was, for purposes of advertisement, printed and circulated in the Occidental city. On my arrival I found Harry Perry, an old-time actor, reading one of these papers, and asked what he thought of it.

"Gad!" said he, "but you must have improved since I last saw you!"

I asked Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Drew how much of their life they supposed had been given over to written and oral advice to stage-struck men and women and to their friendly interceders. Mrs. Drew's eyes were instantly uplifted with an expression of despair, while Jefferson gave vent to a prolonged whistle which was more significant than describable. Much was said about the matter, the gist of which was that such sacrificed time was the penalty exacted of all people attaining positions of prominence. Jefferson was prompt and uniformly courteous in all such affairs; dignified and helpful to strangers, and humorously blunt to friends.

I give the following letter to the famous agnostic, kindly loaned by Mrs. Ingersoll, as part illustration of what has been said:

BUZZARDS BAY, June 12th, '90.

MY DEAR INGERSOLL, — I regret there is no opening in our company for your young friend. If there were you may be assured that he would have it for your sake.

English comedy, the only dish we have to offer, seems to lose its flavor when not cooked up by experienced actors. I might say antiquated, for we belong not to the fossil but to the carbonic era — a lot of "lean and slippered pantaloons." Some day, when chance offers, I shall be glad to see Mr. Hazleton and advise him on the matter. . . .

Faithfully yours,

J. JEFFERSON.

I asked him if he had been much bothered by people who wanted to name patent medicines, games, cigars, etc., after him or his plays. He answered: "I once received an appreciative letter from a gentleman who had seen 'Rip Van Winkle,' and who declared with some show of eloquence that he longed to present me with some tangible evidence of his appreciation. His name was Dunk, and he was a manufacturer, and he would take pleasure in presenting me with

one of his beds. All that he would request was that in the third act of 'Rip Van Winkle,' after rising from the sleep of twenty years, I should say: 'I 'd have had a better time if I had had one of Dunk's patent spring beds!'"

"First night" came at last, and with it as nervous a crowd of Thespians gathered to play "The Rivals" as one could well imagine. Those who had rehearsed unfalteringly in the morning were the first to "dry up" in the evening. There were no great lapses, nor yet any noticeable embarrassments, the people being much too clever and experienced for that, but Mr. Jefferson had something of a task holding us all together. Sir Lucius and Falkland, Jack Absolute and David, came in for promptings that were timely and skilful from Acres. These promptings were not to be wondered at when it is remembered that besides the peculiarity of the situation, in the number of years Mr. Jefferson has played the piece, much new stage business and many very worthy lines and phrases that greatly enrich the play, and especially the part of Acres, have crept in, and, so far as I could discover, exist only in the memory

of the man who headed not only this company but the American theatrical profession. Speeches that one studies as an entirety are broken in upon by the clever sayings of Bob, and one is left for the instant wholly disconcerted. The cleverness and naturalness of the interpolations enlist attention in the direction of Acres, all of which naturally confuses until complete familiarity is established. Then, too, to one who has himself been for years the central figure of plays, it is more or less embarrassing at first to find himself, in stage slang, "feeding the situations" of another.

The audience gave the performance breathless attention, and in their eagerness to hear every word forgot to applaud. Jefferson remarked it, but was scarcely at loss to account for it. As the play progressed, however, the audience became demonstrative and ultimately enthusiastic. At the end of the second act there was an especially hearty recall, and as the curtain rose and the ten "stars" stood forth, there came a wave of tremendous applause. Thereafter there were numerous scene recalls and Jefferson made a speech.

All the players, except Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Drew, feel the irksomeness of the new

situation, while to the others the rôles seem very small compared to those each has been accustomed to play.

Miss Marlowe confided to the writer that she thought Lydia Languish "such a silly lady." Goodwin was in despair over his rôle, which he thought was far from good. The condition of Crane's voice gave him real cause for complaint, and though Taber did not say so, he looked as if there were much too much of Jack Absolute for the little credit he possesses. Nearly every one has a word of discontent. It is, in fact, the usual period of depressive reaction. All this will have passed away with a few performances.

It would be difficult to find a more lovable man than the "Governor," as Jefferson is called by his sons and others. He is courteous, kindly, considerate, able, affable, and felicitous. He has a fund of anecdotes and is original in thought and humorous in expression. His sense of right and wrong is accurate and swift, and he is prompt and fearless in the condemnation of the slightest injustice. He is never stubborn in the maintenance of a position, and will yield gracefully to well-taken points in opposition to his views.

There is a gentleness and sweetness in all he says or does that readily endears him to people.

The subject of education came up. I asked him in what degree the lack of it was any barrier to the success of an actor. He thought that it would discover the actor to the cultured portion of his public, but would not *greatly* hinder his success. Edmund Kean he believed to be an illiterate man, but there was never any question of his great ability after the London debut in "Shylock." "Education has nothing to do with the expression of a passion," he said.

"Do you not believe that the profession of an actor is perhaps the one most capable of utilizing information of whatever nature? In short, the aptitude being given, that a man will succeed who possesses the greatest educational advantages?"

To this both Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Drew answered emphatically: "Yes, of course!" Lydia Languish then remarked naïvely that it was no disadvantage to hold a hand full of graces.

Then came a discussion of Edwin Booth. Jefferson thought him "superior in 'Hamlet,' for which he was best fitted by nature and much study." Mrs. Drew preferred him as Bertuccio

JULIA MARLOWE TABER
as Lydia [illegible]

To Frances Wilson
from Julia Marlowe Taber May, 1896

in "The Fool's Revenge." Goodwin gave his voice for Tarquin in "The Fall of Tarquin," in which Jefferson thought "Edwin" was very fine; he also thought "Macbeth" the weakest performance in Booth's repertory. "As young men, but of vastly different types," declared Jefferson, "Edwin Booth and Edwin Forrest were very handsome men."

I asked Mrs. Drew to deny or affirm an often told story about herself and Mr. "Mat" Snyder, who was in her employ at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia.

MRS. DREW. Go on, I 'll answer.

"It is said that you did not desire to retain the services of the gentleman in question for another season, and that you informed him of your decision by regretting that you and he were not to be together the following year, and that Mr. Snyder said: 'Are you going to leave us, Louisa?'"

There was some laughter at this, and when it was quite done, Mrs. Drew replied:

"It is not true. If I had not desired to re-engage the gentleman, it would not have been necessary to address him at all."

"That's it," said Jefferson; "we never say the best things in any story"; and here he recounted the General Grant story previously told.

As we rode down in the carriage from the theatre at Hartford, the subject of music was started, and Mr. Jefferson made a confession that will hardly bring joy to the worshippers at the throne of Wagner. He thought that quite the cleverest thing "Bill" Nye ever said was: "My friend Wagner's music is really much better than it sounds."

He went on to tell that his daughter, who is very fond of music, took him to hear "Lohengrin," and turning to him in the middle of the performance, her face radiant with enjoyment, asked him if he were not now glad she insisted upon coming. "My dear child," he replied, "I wish we had gone to 'Tony' Pastor's!"

"Music, Wilson, is not intellectual, it is emotional. Here was a grand love story without a single love lay in it! It was not even emotional to me; it was simply mechanical!"

"But, my dear Mr. Jefferson," I interjected, "you will not deny that there may be some emotion, some skill in Wagnerian music, which

nature has made it impossible for you to understand or appreciate?"

"Certainly not," he replied; "there must be great merit in it or it could not have lived and interested as it does. Not to confess this would be very narrow indeed, and I hope I am not that. But Wagner is not for me. Its beauties to me are as a sealed book."

We spoke of happiness. "Joy," I said, "is the god of our household. No one is permitted to hang crape on the door of our feelings."

"That's the proper way," he made answer. "Happiness is the religion of our family. To begin with, we take all the comic papers. No one is permitted to read aloud, and he is begged not to read even to himself, about the mangled corpse of the father and the roasted bodies of the babies, — subjects with which the daily papers disgustingly teem."

He spoke of once meeting Lawrence Barrett standing on a street corner waiting for a car to take him to the gymnasium.

"Going to exercise when you get there, I suppose?" said Jefferson.

"Of course," Barrett replied.

"Why don't you walk?" Jefferson added. "It's better exercise, and it'll save you the time and trouble of going."

He thought it a great outrage to run an underground railway through the graveyard of the Boston Common, and argued from that the advantages of cremation, to which he was not averse. He drew a humorous picture of the confusion that would take place about the Common when the Judgment Day Bugle blew. Some bodies in collecting their limbs would be apt to discover that they had two lefts and no right leg. Another would apologize for the tardiness of his arrival before the Seat of Justice on the ground that he had a Subway running through his spinal column!

He thought it humorously impertinent in certain wits to call a well-known Italian actor "Macaroni," his son "Spaghetti," and his grandson "Vermicelli." The story was suggested by somebody saying at dinner that he preferred macaroni with shellac (tomato) sauce. He also remembered, apropos of this, that the old-time actor, when salaries were in arrears or from pure

ROBERT TABER.
as Captain Absolute.

cussedness, would guy his speeches. In the play of "The Stranger," the phrase "One last look, and then, forget her!" was frequently read "One last look and then spaghetti!"

It is believed that the theatrical profession never contained greater quizzers or "guyers" than Charles R. and Edwin Thorne. It was related of them by our "Sir Lucius" that Charles once engaged Edwin Thorne to play the "messenger" who brings the letter to Claude Melnotte in Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons." Knowing Edwin's propensity to pranks, Charles gave him the part only on the solemn promise that nothing that was not in the rôle should be said or done. The scene runs:

SERVANT. A letter for Citizen Melnotte.

CLAUDE. A letter! from her perhaps — who sent thee?

SERVANT. Why, Monsieur — I mean Citizen Beauseant — Beauseant, who stops to dine at the Golden Lion on his way to his chateau, etc., etc.

The following is what is said to have actually occurred:

SERVANT. A letter for Mr. Belmont.

CLAUDE (under his breath). Damn your eyes,

what did I tell you? Do you want to ruin everything? (Aloud) What!

SERVANT (doggedly). You heard what I said!

CLAUDE (aside, with much meaning). I 'll give it to you for this! (Aloud) Who sent thee?

SERVANT. Old Bansang!

(Exit Servant, very abruptly pursued by Claude in a murderous frame of mind.)

Charles pursued Edwin upstairs into his dressing-room, where the latter securely barricaded himself. "Come out!" yells Charles. "I won't!" replies Edwin, and then in an effeminate tone he called through the keyhole: "And, Charley whoever told you you could play Claude Melnotte told you a wicked, wicked story!"

(Exit Charles in roars of laughter.)

"In a previous season with 'The Rivals,'" said Jefferson, "Maurice Barrymore, one of the wittiest of men, was in the company. He arranged the Christmas presents for the members of the cast. Among the gifts were peanuts to Mrs. Drew, who abhors them, and to me a book of 'The Rivals' with every part cut out except Bob Acres." Jefferson told this with gleeful appreciation.

Professor Weir, of Yale, gave us a charming reception, at which there were beautiful women and distinguished men. On leaving the house, "Sir Lucius" Goodwin had hold of "Acres" Jefferson's arm, while "David" Wilson grasped that of "Sir Anthony" Crane. We were all in formal attire, — long black coats, gloves, and tall hats, — and the departure from the scene of festivity was so much like a funeral procession that "Sir Lucius" comically increased the resemblance by taking off his hat and saying solemnly to Jefferson, "He was a good fellow!"

Jefferson, thinking he referred to our host, said: "Yes, he is a fine man!"

"No," persisted "Sir Lucius," tearfully, referring to the suggestion inspired by the procession, "I mean the deceased."

The remark was so unexpected and so humorously made that we could scarcely control ourselves until out of sight of the house, when we all gave way to a prolonged fit of laughter.

In the manuscript sent Jefferson, this was one of the stories objected to; but Professor Weir, having a sense of humor and seeing no impro-

priety where indeed none was intended, consents to the story's publication.

The performance at New Haven was remarkably smooth. The audience was one of the most enthusiastic I have ever met.

Mrs. Drew thought the extreme heartiness of the plaudits would likely spoil us for the rest of the trip. Jefferson was sure the subsequent enthusiasm would equal it, and it did. After the performance we were entertained by Professors Weir and Lounsbury at the Graduates' Club.

We — Jefferson, Crane, Goodwin, and I — were conducted to the "Crypt," sung to, and told we were "jolly good fellows" and obliged to make responses, which we did. Jefferson enjoyed the speeches hugely, supporting himself against the wall when laughing heartily.

Jefferson, Crane, and Goodwin went down to New York by boat to-night.

The matinee performance at the American Theatre, New York, was a clean-cut, fine representation, with everybody on the *qui vive* before an audience that was delightful to see, thrilling to hear.

I heard some complaint that New York should

E. M. HOLLAND

To Francis Wilson with regards,
May 6 1896,
E. M. Holland

have been put off with a single performance and that a matinee, while Brooklyn was given an evening. When arrangements were being made, no theatre had open time for the date intended to be played. Jefferson deemed it prudent to give but one performance. "It was better," he said "to underrate than overrate." He widely underrated.

The Brooklyn and Philadelphia engagements were but a repetition of that of New York. It was a grand sight in the Quaker City to see the vast Academy of Music with its tiers of people cheering on the efforts of the artists. Mr. Jefferson made a speech in which he said he had compressed the play into the shape he believed the public of the present day would accept. He spoke of the precocity of Sheridan, who had written two of the greatest comedies of this or any other age, "The Rivals" and "The School for Scandal," and that too before he was twenty-six years of age. He again justified his amendments and alterations of "The Rivals."

Of acting, he said it was a great mistake for the artist to attempt entirely to sink his individuality in the parts he assumed. By so doing he

was robbing the audience of that for which they were looking, that for which they admired him. One day I called his attention to the fact that in his Autobiography he had condemned "star" casts of plays. In a speech before the curtain he spoke of having written that star casts were usually failures; and this he still maintained, because it was difficult for people who had become accustomed to positions of prominence to adapt themselves — "to subordinate themselves" — were the exact words — to the situations of the play. He felt sure, however, that the audience would agree with him that the present cast was a gloriously exceptional instance.

Speaking with him about the extraordinary advance in importance of the modern Dutch painters in whom he was greatly interested, I asked him to define the difference between those two great Dutch masters, Israels and Neuhuys.

"I think Neuhuys," he said, "quite as good an artist or workman as Israels, — in fact, he is even a better craftsman, — but he lacks the spiritual quality of Israels. It is as in acting, where, while one man will play a part in a satisfactory way, another will take the same rôle and by add-

ing a spiritual quality make it a wholly different and more successful thing."

Mr. Jefferson, his son "Willie," Charles A. Walker, of Boston, and I visited the Walters gallery in Baltimore. He stopped in an admiring way before Rousseau's "L'Effet du Givre," or, as he calls it, "Frosty Morning," — the sky effect of which is so superb, and said: "I have seen it often before, but it never looked so big (fine) to me as it does to-day." He said further that Mr. Walters the elder had paid $35,000 for it, and that Mr. Widener, of Philadelphia, had told him of his intention to bid $75,000 for it if in his time the painting were ever offered for sale. In such an event Jefferson thought it would bring $100,000. Troyon's "Cattle" he found to be "the quintessence of fine art." He declared Decamps' "Suicide" to be a great piece of art, notwithstanding the unpleasantness of the subject. The light effect was especially fine.

He inveighed constantly against the dreadful, the unpleasant in art, and said no man had a right to poison the atmosphere of his home with it. Yet, on questioning, I found his admiration

so great for the skill of this "Suicide" of Decamps' that he would be willing to have it in his home.

"You see," he said in explanation, "there is nothing particularly unpleasant about the man lying across the table — from a short distance; from here it might be a rose." I did not quite admit this, but it cannot be denied that the skill is great.

Later he said: "Decamps does not horrify his subject, he poetizes it.

"This poetry and mystery," he continued, "I try to give to 'Rip Van Winkle.' If Rip were to yawn in Act II, the effect would be lost, for a yawn would be expressive of a night's rest. The mysteriousness in the play comes from having no one speak but Rip in the scenes in the mountains."

"The Coming Storm," by Daubigny, he called one of the most "jewel" pictures he ever saw. He begged me not to neglect to take a good look at Fortuny's "Snake Charmer," one of the gems of the collection.

De Neuville's "In the Trenches," so worthily placed in this great collection, was offered to Mr.

JOSEPH HOLLAND
as Falkland

To Francis Nelson
with affectionate regards of
Joseph Holland

Jefferson in London twenty years ago for three hundred dollars; thousands could not buy it to-day. This brought about Mr. Jefferson's characterization of the difference between De Neuville and Detaille. The latter he described as a great artist, but no genius; De Neuville, he said was both a great artist and a great genius.

Millet's "Sheepfold" he thought one of the world's greatest pictures. "Millet," he said, "painted from within, — that is, painted with his soul! The picture grows as one looks at it. So penetrating is his poetry, so completely does solitude invade the fancy, one forgets the painting is but twenty inches wide, and soon believes it as big as nature itself."

Jefferson drew our attention to the great simplicity of the work, which, with the poetry of the artist, he said, was the very bulwark of his skill.

He made a contrast between Millet and Jules Breton, describing the latter's composition and figures as skilful but theatrical.

While viewing a Troyon, he remarked the distinction between art and realism, that they could not live together. If they could, pinning real

wool on a painted sheep would be better than Troyon's masterly reproduction of it.

"The distinction between De Neuville and Detaille needs qualification, perhaps," he remarked. "I don't know but Detaille is the better artist, as far as his detail and drawing are concerned, but it is on a flat surface and carries with it no such force or effect as the work of De Neuville.

"So it is on the stage, — you get an actor who has art and you get a player who is skilful but cold; but you get a fellow who has both genius and art and you get skill and fire as well."

On Corot's death it was found he had painted some eight hundred canvases. Jefferson said, with a twinkle in his eye, that there were over nine hundred in America alone!

This brought about the discussion of fraudulent pictures in America, the number of which he declared to be enormous. "Ignorance and vanity have much to do with the matter," said Mr. Jefferson. "People who have no doubt where they may buy the best coffee or the finest raiment seem all at sea as to the whereabouts of the most reputable dealers in art. Art is a new thing to them, and they are too vain to

confess their ignorance of the subject. The art shyster — and he is everywhere — sees this and trades upon it."

"Have you never been bitten in your art purchases?" I asked.

"Of course I have," he said; "and, like other people, my vanity has kept me from speaking of it. But I have learned my lesson and I have long since dealt only with art establishments of acknowledged reputation. Improved fortune brings increased desire for the refinements of life," he continued, "which seeks expression in artistic surroundings, household adornment, and the like. Now the newly rich fellow, throwing aside all the sagacity he used in acquiring his money, generally plumps himself into the arms of the first glib-tongued art fraud he encounters and allows himself to be unmercifully swindled."

"How would you remedy this?" I asked.

"You can't wholly," he replied quickly.

"If you were called upon to give a rule for the guidance of the beginner in art purchases, what would it be?" I queried.

"I 'd give two," was his reply.

"Which?"

"First, never to buy pictures of the travelling art vender."

"Never?"

"Never!"

"Why?"

"Because I don't believe that the best establishments hawk their pictures all over the country, certainly not their *finest* pictures, which meet with ready sale at home; and the travelling art dealer is generally a fraud."

"Generally?"

"Generally!"

"Well?"

"Second, never to buy pictures of any art establishment whatever unless it has an established reputation for honesty."

As we were walking into another part of the gallery, I remarked that I thought most beginners and modest buyers of pictures were frightened away from the big art places by the general sight of elegance, plate-glass windows, etc., which they felt had to be paid for by customers.

"True," he said; "but who else is there to pay for them? If these places are reputable, is n't it better to pay your part of these elegances and

Francis Wilson with the regards of
Fanny Rice

UofM

get genuine art than pay money to a shyster and get worse than nothing?"

We had moved on to another picture. "Let me call your attention," he remarked, "to Corot's treatment of this subject of St. Sebastian. All the other paintings I have ever seen treat the thing in a repulsive way. St. Sebastian is generally seen with an arrow in his vitals, another in his eye, another in his heart, suffering frightful agony; but Corot's treatment of him here is one of relief. The soldiers have departed, the Saint's wounds are being bathed, the last arrow extracted from his arm, and there is a calm, a peacefulness in the wounded man's face, and, indeed, about the whole picture, that tells of the work of the big-souled artist. It is not the Sodomite that is depicted, but the Sermon on the Mount."

Pursing up his lips, folding his hands in front of him in a characteristic way, and gazing about at the great number of paintings Mr. Walters has collected, he remarked:

"Charles Lamb said, 'Happy is that man who has but one painting — and that a great one!' The Chinese [Japanese?] go even further than this — they have but one fine piece of art ware on

view in their houses, and there is much in it, believe me. I shall never buy more pictures than the rooms of my house will hold. To do so is to rob your house of its *homeliness* and give it the barrenness of an art museum. Too many pictures in a private collection is but to overfeed your guests"; and then with a knowing look he added, "One can have constipation of the mind as well as of the body!"

As we were leaving the Walters collection, we paused again for a final view of Rousseau's "Frosty Morning." "Is n't it fine!" he said. "What a lesson! True feeling comes from within. Byron said, in acting: 'Kean for fire, Cooke for malignity, Kemble for dignity, but Mrs. Siddons for *soul*. She was worth them all!' So it is in the painting — Rousseau for soul, and he is worth them all!" To this, in the manuscript I sent him, he added: "No, this is saying too much. The Barbizon fellows were all equally great. It is the last one we look at that seems the best."

Jefferson seemed never to tire. At Cincinnati, coming back from the Rookwood Pottery, when he had swiftly boarded an electric car, he expressed

his belief that he had not aged at all in the past twenty-five years. His ambition knew not what it was to flag, for he eagerly made arrangements to come to Cincinnati and paint some pictures for the pottery people. He believed it much in his line of work, and even hinted that he could so easily become interested in the art that he would build a kiln of his own at Crow's Nest.

He purchased a number of pieces of the ware, and selected the best examples — particularly the sheep and landscape subjects. While the artisan was "throwing some clay into shape" on which Jefferson was to scratch his name, places of birth somehow, apropos of nothing, came up for discussion, and his eldest boy, Charles, stated that he was born in Macon, Georgia. "Yes," says Jefferson, instantly, "and we came near leaving you there for board!"

Jefferson referred to his chagrin at finding he had not said a word in his Autobiography of his old friend E. L. Davenport. As he wrote Fanny Davenport, he was astounded to make the discovery, and in apologizing to her verbally he expressed the determination to devote a whole chapter to her father when the book was revised

for another issue. He said it gave him great joy, on the occasion of the presentation of the loving cup[1] to him by the actors and actresses of America, to pay a tribute to Davenport and J. H. Stoddart. Stoddart and Fanny Davenport were both compelled to rise from the audience and bow acknowledgments, — the latter on behalf of her father.

The letter of apology has been sent me, on inquiry, by Fanny Davenport's sister, Mrs. William Seymour.

St. Louis, Mo., April 4th, 1894.

My dear Miss Davenport, — Your justly reproachful letter has just reached me, and I assure you that my mortification at the gentleness of your rebuke is all that your keenest revenge could desire.

I cannot tell you how I regret that the omission of your father's name in my book should have caused you any pain — let me confess to you that you are not the first that has noticed its absence. I have been rated in harsher terms than you have applied for this same neglect —

[1] November 8, 1895, at the Garden Theatre, New York.

truly I was in hopes that you would never read my book.

I knew your father well — I acted with him — we were the best of friends — and I admired his acting. He was an artist of the highest rank, and in some characters he had no superior, if an equal.

When I return to New York I shall at once apply to my publishers, that I may correct my error in future editions.

I am not astonished at your surprise, and can only wonder that it was expressed "more in sorrow than in anger."

I know how you reverence your father's memory, and beg that you will forgive me.

Faithfully yours,

J. JEFFERSON.

At Cincinnati he paid himself an unintentional compliment which made me smile. At Rookwood every piece of pottery his son Charles picked out seemed to please him. In the evening, as we paced the stage between scenes, discussing the day's events, I said: "Charley has a most accurate measure of your taste." "Oh, he has splendid taste," he replied. "He paints very

well, too, — while he lacks in detail, his sky and water are as good as mine." I smiled at this. "Oh, don't make a mistake," he swiftly replied. "Every man that is clever knows it. Vanity does not consist in knowing you have knowledge, but in parading it." He strutted in a pompous way, and added, "See how clever I am!"

Apropos of the loving cup given him by the actors and actresses of America, he said he was greatly delighted with it. He spoke affectionately of the incident of his grandson, four years old, hiding in it when he (Jefferson) was brought in to inspect it. He had been greatly surprised to find the cup so much larger than he thought from the model he had seen on the day of the presentation.

As we were at supper, bowling along toward St. Louis, he told us of a Western political orator very much intoxicated, leaning his head upon his (Jefferson's) shoulder, looking up maudlinly into Rip's face and saying: "Joe, I 've modelled my life on yours."

"Sir Lucius," it appeared, was going to Australia, where, among other things, he meant to

play "The Rivals." Jefferson promised him a prompt-book, as he (Jefferson) had arranged the piece. Mrs. Drew inquired where he meant to get such a prompt-book. "Write it, of course!" "Oh!" said Mrs. Drew, significantly, "I wondered, for I knew you never had one of your own!" which much amused Jefferson.

He often watched those scenes of the play in which he was not concerned, and his comments thereon were most instructive. Standing by him, I remarked upon the delicacy and cleverness of Mrs. Drew's Mrs. Malaprop. "Oh, fine!" he said, with an admiring shake of the head. "The reading of the letter and her ultimate discovery that young Absolute wrote it, is the perfection of acting." Mrs. Malaprop's "What — am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of *an old weather-beaten she-dragon* — hey!" and her indescribably droll expression as she utters, "Oh, mercy! — was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?" and the affected simplicity, when mollified by Sir Anthony, with which she says: "Well, Sir Anthony, since you desire it, we will not anticipate the past," are indeed, as Jefferson says, "the perfection of acting," such as

one reads of in the past, but seldom meets with in the present.

How manly and handsome Taber is as "Jack" Absolute! No wonder Sir Henry Irving, who saw the performance in New York, wished to engage him for London. How beautiful and earnestly pettish is Lydia on discovering there is to be no elopement, and with what an artistic grasp and swing — with what a mien of ancient chivalry — Sir Anthony and Mrs. Malaprop exeunt, strutting the minuet. How the audience rise to it!

"Pray, tell me how you came to write your Autobiography?" I asked him. "Certainly," he said. "Come back where we won't interrupt the scene. It was never intended," said he, "that the Autobiography should see the light before my death. It was intended as a legacy to my children. I had begun it, and had gone far enough to know that I had gotten hold of some good things — some of which I was telling one day to William Dean Howells. 'Have you never written down any of these things?' he exclaimed, and then I confessed I had. I had also spoken to Richard Watson Gilder about it, and he asked the

privilege to publish it in case I changed my mind as to making it a posthumous work. Shortly after, I got a letter from the Harpers asking if I would not consider a proposition from them for the book's immediate appearance. I wrote them that I felt myself compromised to another party, but should let them know immediately if the other party did not decide to negotiate. I then had an interview with Mr. Gilder, with the result that an offer, which I accepted, of $12,000 was made for the work, —$6,000 when the publication was half through, and the other $6,000 when it was finished. I was also to receive ten per cent on each book sold. Gilder received the right to print such portions in the 'Century Magazine' as he deemed best." "Does the sale of the book continue pretty good?" "Oh yes — not as good as the first year, of course, but I had a letter recently saying it was as good now as at any time since the first year."

A pleasant incident on the train one day was the round of applause given each individual as he entered the dining-car from the other mummers assembled. Mrs. Drew remarked that she could n't understand how anybody could be late for dinner.

Jefferson told a story, in his best Rip Van Winkle dialect, of a Dutchman hailing a vessel with:

"Vot for boad is dot?"

"Hel–ve–tia," comes the answer.

"To hell mit yourself," goes back the angry response. "You are a tam fool!"

For a long time Jefferson had not acted so late in the season, and the heat enervated him somewhat. Every possible attention was paid to the comfort of the company, as was shown by the presence of electric fans in the dressing-rooms and on the cars, and there were even ice-cream, cake, and punch at the back of the stage during the performances.

Music and the drama coming up again for discussion, he said: "The advantage that the drama has over music is that the drama is both emotional and intellectual. Music is emotional only," — an opinion in which the trained musician, mindful of Bach and Handel, will not coincide.

Contrasting two great novelists, he said: "I know many unpleasant things about Dickens, and people insist that Thackeray is a much greater literary mind than Dickens, yet there is some-

thing about the writings of Dickens that holds me faster than those of Thackeray. I suppose I am all wrong, but that is my opinion."

When he played at a certain theatre, he was much annoyed by the musical conductor, who would turn his back to the stage and look out over the audience from the conductor's chair. "Now, you just try to act a play to indifference of that kind! It 's impossible! It kills everything as dead as a door-nail."

Jefferson was liberal-minded toward the drama of to-day. He thought the acting and actors of the present time equal if not superior to those of previous years. He said that all things progress, and it is narrow and unreasonable to suppose that such vital things as the drama and acting stand still. "The best talent on the dramatic stage," he said, "has come from the so-called variety or vaudeville theatre. I could not get an engagement at Wallack's at one time because I was regarded as the variety performer of my day."

Julia Marlowe accidentally dropped a rose upon the stage just before one of Mr. Jefferson's scenes. As he came on the stage he caught sight of the flower, and he picked it up so swiftly that I was

interested to know why. I asked him, later on. "I couldn't have acted with it there," he said. "The eye is such a tyrant that it would have constantly sought the unusual on the scene. My attention would have been distracted and my scene ruined."

I asked him if he recalled having written in his Autobiography of a similar incident occurring to the elder Booth during a performance of Sir Giles Overreach in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts." He recalled it perfectly, and added that it was a feather and not a rose that Booth had picked up. I wondered if he had thought of the Booth incident when he had stooped for the rose. He declared he had, and asked of what use was intelligence if we did not take advantage of the teachings of our predecessors.

Crane tells me he has been reading his next season's play, "A Fool of Fortune," to Jefferson. Throughout the perusal Jefferson's exclamations of approval were most encouraging. The close of the drama was sad, and when Crane had finished there was a lengthy pause during which Jefferson sat with his head resting on his hand, the same attitude he had maintained while Crane was reading.

"Very good," he said finally. "But I don't think people want to see you die. When they go to see Irving they expect to see him die, and when they go to see —— they *hope* he'll die; but, William, I don't believe the public wishes to see you expire."

I had been reading the recollections of a retired actress and called Jefferson's attention to a paragraph it contained, which I read him:

"I have written to show young girls that the glitter of the stage is not all gold, to make them realize how serious an undertaking it is to adopt a life so full of hardships, humiliation, and even dangers." He bristled at once. "I object to that most emphatically," he said, "because it is stated as if it were true alone of the theatrical profession. The business of the shop-girl, the typewriter, the governess, and the companion are fraught with even greater dangers to young girls. The remark is unfortunate, and should have been qualified.

"When I have been asked my advice about going on the stage I have invariably answered, If you are satisfied you are a great genius, or have special histrionic gifts, or are going to adopt the profession to earn a living, feeling yourself fitted

for it, yes; but if you are going on the stage simply to show your vanity, no! It is not the stage that creates vanity, but vanity that creates a longing for the stage. Here the distinction between vanity and admiration should be clearly understood. Vanity is just the reverse of admiration, the love of which is natural and wholesome. Who is it that does n't like to be admired? What kind of a man or woman is it to whom admiration is not welcome?"

Jefferson thought that the unhappiness of Mrs. Siddons's old age, quoted by the same author, was due less to "the overstimulating atmosphere in which she had lived" than the fact of her retirement, which robbed her of the aim of her life, which rendered her incapable of deeply interesting herself in anything else, and which caused her on the night of her retirement to sink dejectedly into a chair and exclaim: "Then this is the end of all!"

I read further in the aforementioned recollections, and he was greatly pleased, and pronounced as "true" and "just" the authoress's declaration that "only blind prejudice could regard the stage and immorality as synonymous."

"Do you agree with that enthusiast who says the drama in its highest form is as great a spiritual force as religion?"

"Certainly not!" he replied, "but it is its intellectual compeer. It is a civilizing, refining influence. They may say what they like of the stage, but I shall always uphold it, and I shall never give it up until I must. I tell my boys this is the profession for them, and they must never leave it if they have talent for it."

He thought there were times when everybody was discontented with himself and his work, and he explained that it was during one of these pessimistic moods — and he had occasion for many such — that Edwin Booth must have written the "discontented paper" cited by the authoress previously quoted. In all his long intimacy with Booth he did not remember his giving expression to any discontent with regard to his profession or with even the "glare and excitement" of it. The glare and excitement Jefferson thinks to be an essential part of the dramatic profession, — a profession which cannot be practised in an attic or a back parlor, — and as for "the dislike of rehearsals in an atmosphere seldom penetrated

by the sun and air," to quote again from the recollections I was reading him, he thought that, too, a part of the exaction of the practice of the art. "I don't like rehearsals any more than others, because — see how natural a failing is vanity! — I don't get any applause for my work; and applause is just as sweet to me as to other normal beings."

We spoke of Eugene Field, and he laughingly declared he thought him a little daft toward the last.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"At New Orleans," he replied, "Field and I ranged all through the curiosity shops, and the man would buy *dolls* and *such* things."

I told him Field said he never saw a man like Jefferson, — that his eye was caught with all sorts of gewgaws, and that he simply squandered money on trifles.

"That 's it," he chuckled; "one half the world thinks the other half crazy."

Sir Henry Irving sent Jefferson, suitably engraved, the cane used by the first Sir Peter Teazle — "Cock-Salmon Farren" — and Jefferson said that it and the loving cup presented to him

should, on his death, go to the Players. I shook hands with him on this, for, as one of the proposers of the cup and the provider of the inscription, I had always hoped the cup would ultimately go to the Players. Once before, in talking over the matter, Rip had said he thought it ought to go there, but this assertion in the dressing-room at Grand Rapids, Michigan, that it was his positive intention to will it to the Players, and that his family agreed with him, quite determined the matter.

"Have you written it down," I asked, "in your 'last will and testament'?"

"Not yet," he replied, "but I shall do so."

"I hope you won't neglect it."

"Oh, I sha'n't," he replied emphatically.

"You know how many friends of yours there are," I said to him, "who would be delighted to have you leave them some trifling token of remembrance — such as a quill pen, an old hat, a pistol, Rip's gun or wig, a book, a feather, an old paint brush, or anything that you regard as a trifle, but which would be very precious to them. I have told you how Laurence Hutton labored for months with Edwin Booth," I continued, "to

get him to sign a list of such small presents to his friends, and how Booth agreed that it was the very thing, but, despite numerous proddings, Booth never signed?"

"Yes," he answered, "I can understand that a man does n't care particularly about doing such a thing. It looks too much, as Mrs. Siddons said, like 'the end of all.'"

"Well," I rejoined, "if you do make such a list, and I hope you will, do not forget to leave me Rip's hat."

"You 'd better be careful, my boy," he answered, pointing his finger at me. "You may go first!"

Yesterday was a gala day on the cars. Fanny Rice Purdy's baby had a birthday. Everybody interested himself. The table was prettily decorated, and among the presents were pearl and gold pins, a music box, mechanical toys of all kinds, books, especially engraved glasses, and champagne and kisses. The central feature of the table was a birthday cake with two little white candles, the tiny flames of which seemed to wave welcome and congratulations. For a few seconds mother, child,

and grandmother stood astonished before the great array; then the mother beat a precipitate retreat to her stateroom, there to have a good old-fashioned cry. There was a choking up all around, and for the moment conversation was impossible.

The demand we made on the financial resources of the playgoers of Grand Rapids appears to have been too great. For the first time during the tour there were empty seats in the back rows of the theatre. This led to some wag posting in the usual place for such things the following:

"Ladies and gentlemen of the All Star Co.
Are respectfully informed
that owing to the slump in
business at Grand Rapids,
the season will close in
New York City, Saturday,
May 30th, '96.
Kindly leave costumes with Willie."

It was decided to have a flashlight photograph of the company, and Columbus, Ohio, was the place and after the play the time to have it done. We were obliged to wait until the audience had left the theatre. We became restless, Jefferson

and Mrs. Drew especially so. Numerous journeys to the curtain peephole showed the audience still retreating slowly, as if loath to leave.

"Never," says Jefferson, — "never again."

"Why, this is more tiring than a performance," says Mrs. Drew.

Finally, as in football, "we lined up" for the flashlight and the photograph. There was a blinding glare, and then came in clear-cut tones from Jefferson's irreverent but witty son Tom:

"Now wash up!"

"Why," says Mrs. Drew, half earnestly, "he talks to us as if we were minstrels."

Back again in the cars, off for Cleveland and at our midnight repast, the subject of minstrels came up. Jefferson said he thought he was one of the first men to black his face after the appearance and success of "Jim Crow" (T. D.) Rice.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Drew, "there are very few men in this company who have not at one time or another been associated with minstrel performances."

"I played 'Brudder Bones,'" said Mr. Jefferson. "Everybody knows I was in the minstrel business," Goodwin exclaimed. "Yes," I re-

marked, "because we were there together." "Well," joined in Crane, "I was on the tambourine end with Campbell's minstrels.

"I remember telling this at Lawrence Barrett's house, at Cohasset, where the rest of the party consisted of Edwin Booth and Stuart Robson. Booth then told how he and the comedian J. S. Clarke were minstrels in their younger days, and he followed this up by declaring that he used to 'pick a little on the banjo.' I laughed, and Booth inquired the reason; I added, 'Oh, nothing much; only Booth and the banjo seemed such an odd combination.'"

Some of the spare time at night between scenes and acts is devoted by Falkland and David to pantomiming, in which Falkland, perhaps because of deafness, has become an adept. Expressing oneself without the use of words or the deaf and dumb alphabet is no easy task, and is recommended to aspirants to the stage as helpful.

There was a long chat at luncheon at Rochester over various matters concerning the stage. Jefferson said he knew of literary men who were envious of the actor's *present* popularity. "It is absurd," he declared, "for if the actor does not

get his credit here, where will he get it? The 'Old Fellow' [his customary way of alluding to Shakespeare] expressed it when he said 'the poor player that struts and frets his hour on the stage and then is heard no more.' Yes, sir, there is nothing so useless as a dead actor. Who speaks now of Gus Adams, a contemporary of Forrest? An actor with genius — and with art to back it up — who played the Romans, Brutus, Lear, better, I think, than Forrest. Yet he is not now even a tradition. Look at Burton, the finest low comedian of his time, who lives only in the memory of those who saw him act, but who is as dead as dead can be in the memory of the sons whose fathers saw him play. People speak of Betterton, Garrick, Kean, and Mrs. Siddons, and they mark milestones in the dramatic pathway, for they lived at a time when literary men wrote sympathetically of the stage, and so their memories are kept alive; but whom else do people speak of?"

"Don't you think Edwin Booth will be more than a tradition?" I ventured.

"Probably — he founded a great club which will serve to keep his memory alive."

"Certainly the public will remember Joseph Jefferson," I said.

"Don't you believe it!" replied Jefferson. Then, after a thoughtful silence, he added: "Well, yes, perhaps because of my book, which will serve to rescue me from total oblivion. Irving will be remembered because he was knighted, Booth for the reason I have stated, Mary Anderson because of her book, and I, perhaps, because of mine. No, believe me, the painter, the sculptor, the author all live in their works after death, but there is nothing so useless as a dead actor. Acting is a tradition. Actors must have their reward now, in the applause of the public, or never. If their names live, it will be because of some extraneous circumstances."

Considering the hold the character of Rip Van Winkle and his own ideal impersonation of it had on the imagination and affection of the youth and age of our country, I said it was easily conceivable to me that one day a statue might be erected by public subscription to Joseph Jefferson's memory. He laughed at this, and lowered his head. Then, as if the idea, though startling, were not repugnant, he said slowly and modestly:

"It would be a great honor — not merely for me, but for Washington Irving."

He told us of Laurence Hutton's once showing him a manuscript of an article for a magazine. He had asked Hutton when it was to be published, and was told perhaps not for a year.

"Just fancy," continued Jefferson, "waiting that long for a round of applause."

He gave us a humorous account of once meeting with the prize-fighter "Joe" Coburn in a restaurant at St. Louis. Coburn swung over to the table where Jefferson was sitting, and said:

"I hear you and me's rivals dis week?"

"Yes," answered Jefferson, "but I am glad, Mr. Coburn, it is not in the same ring."

After the matinee at Syracuse, I went to him with a long countenance and asked him for an explanation of his having sworn at me, under his breath, on the stage. He took me quite seriously, and laughingly denied having done so; and, truth to tell, the assertion had no foundation in fact, except as to some perfectly proper exclamations of impatience and disgust

which Acres was making, *sotto voce*, at the whining cowardice of David. Yet so keenly does Jefferson feel the various emotions he is depicting, that he not infrequently says things half aloud on the stage which, if they were heard, would greatly surprise his audiences.

For instance, nearly always, at the closing of the second act in "The Rivals," where Bob throws himself upon the lounge, overcome by the thought of being a principal in a duel, Jefferson, with back to audience and with head rolling from side to side in pitiful comic despair, exclaims:

"Oh, my God! my God! What a d——d fool I am!"

Apropos of these half-uttered and sometimes fully expressed exclamations, — reflexes of the emotions of the character, — Jefferson tells a story of Macready, whom he parenthetically described as all art and no genius. He said that Macready would quarrel with his dresser, or resort to any other petty means of putting himself into a condition to "fire up" as much as possible for the requirements of his impassioned scenes. Phelps, who played Macduff to Mac-

ready's Macbeth, was astounded one night to find the Thane of Cawdor swearing at him under his breath, and not understanding, waited until the next night to make sure, and, there being no doubt about the matter, swore back like mad at the now actually enraged Macbeth. *Sotto voce* they berated each other, — *sotto voce*, too, Macready was heard to say he would discharge Macduff; and Phelps replied he would n't think of continuing under the d——d management of Macbeth. Then the swords flashed fire in their furious combat, while the audience, raised to a pitch of excitement by the realism of the scene, applauded wildly. On the fall of the curtain Macready sprang to his feet, rushed up to Phelps, and grasping him by both hands, exclaimed:

"Thank you! thank you, Mr. Phelps! You have been so kind to me to-night!"

Less talented and morally weaker men in Macready's condition, Jefferson declared, would have resorted to stimulants; and he thought the explanation of the reason why some actors drank was that, conscious of their shortcomings, their lack of power to reproduce their dramatic effects,

they sought stimulus in liquor to give them a false courage to pass through the ordeal of their shortcomings.

"In the drama," he continued, "without the fire of genius, art is cold and calculating. Without the power of art genius is uncontrolled and unreproductive. In such a case genius is still genius, — flashing and magnificent, but fitful and uncertain."

Sometimes — as with everybody — Mrs. Drew missed a word during the play; and it was very interesting to see her supply either a synonym or maybe a circumlocutory phrase, which she did with much skill. In "The Rivals" she should say to David, "You shall be our cohort.' "Cohort" does n't always come to her, and she waves her hand and exclaims, "You shall be our — our — *guide, philosopher, and friend* — lead the way." She has made so many clever interpolations into the rôle of Mrs. Malaprop that it is puzzling at times to her, as to Jefferson, to remember where Sheridan leaves off and Drew and Jefferson begin. Giving the wrong letter to Captain Absolute, and the silly confusion, mincing prudery, and expressions of affected girlishness

attending its withdrawal, as she said, "There 's a slight mistake," is only one of Mrs. Drew's skilful introductions. She asked Mr. Jefferson if he thought it permissible.

"I should think it was!" he replied. "It is precisely what Sheridan himself would have done if he had thought of it."

In Utica, as Jefferson and I sat alone watching the sunset through the windows of the side-tracked Pullman car, he became retrospective. He talked *at* rather than *to* me, keeping his eyes fastened all the while on the varying aspect of the sky. He marvelled at the many changes he had seen in his time and day. As if suggested by the declining rays of the sun, he said he had seen the complete evolution of manufactured light as a means of dispelling darkness. He had grown up with candles, when, floated on blocks of wood in a trough of water, they had furnished the foot-lights of the theatre. Then came fluid lamps, and, as a wonderful advance, kerosene, which in turn had given way to the brilliancy of gas, when the acme of false illumination was thought to be attained, and now, he said, "we have electricity, which furnishes our light, rivalling the sun, drives our

engines, and the full uses and limitations of which are still unknown." He had seen the tomato evolve from an ornament to an edible, and had watched sometimes the birth and always the early efforts of such wonders as telegraphy, the sewing-machine, the telephone, the printing-press, the "ocean greyhound," the phonograph, the type-writer, the bicycle, the automobile; and, beginning with the stage-coach, river-barge, and canal as means of conveyance, he was now enjoying the luxury of a Pullman car.

As we jogged along from the station to the theatre, I asked:

"Is it possible to make a play that shall be at one and the same time a good acting play and good literature?"

"Undoubtedly," he replied.

"Can you give me ten examples of plays, except those of Shakespeare, that have the double acquirement?"

"I can give you fifty," he rejoined.

"Ten will do," said I.

He instantly named the following: "Virginius," "The Hunchback," "The Wife," "William Tell," "Richelieu," "Lady of Lyons," "New

Way to Pay Old Debts," "Money," "The Honeymoon," "School," "Caste," "Ours," "Fazio," "Love's Sacrifice," "The Wife's Secret," "The Gamester," "Douglas," "Isabella," "The Fatal Marriage," "She Stoops to Conquer," "The Rivals," "The School for Scandal," and "London Assurance."

"But why did you say 'except Shakespeare'?" he asked.

"Because," I replied, "it was conceded, I believe, that Shakespeare's plays, or most of them, were both good acting plays and good literature."

"Is it necessary," I again ventured, "for a play's success, that it should contain good literature?"

"Not at all," he answered emphatically.

"Are there not many examples of good plays that have succeeded, and which, from a literary point of view, were very slight?" asked I.

"Very many indeed," he returned. "The literature of a play must always be in abeyance because the eye is a greater tyrant, is swifter than the ear. What the eye conveys to the brain, the brain will not consent to accept at second-hand by the comparatively laggard ear."

"That is to say, actions speak louder than words, even when the words are couched in fine phrases."

"Precisely," said he. "You may have all the good literature you wish in a play if it does not interfere with the play's action; and at the same time the absence of fine writing in a play will not injure it if the story and construction are right."

"But, surely," I asked, "literary merit in a good play will enhance its chance of success?"

"Vastly, if it be subservient to the action," he replied. "You may have a very good play with very bad literature."

I asked him where it was that he had used the phrase "Keep your heart warm and your head cool when acting."

"It was in connection with the Coquelin-Irving discussion," he answered.

"Who was right in that discussion?"

"Both," said he. "One produced his effect by remaining cool, and the other by losing himself in feelings of the character. They got what they aimed at — the effect — though by entirely different methods. It is as absurd for one man

to say that his method of doing a thing is the only way, as the claim that is set up that heaven is to be reached only through a certain belief. Now I tell you boys how I think a certain effect may be made in acting. What if you can't do it in that way? Must the effect be lost? Nonsense! Get it in another!"

Of players who slighted their work he said: "They are among actors what the sparrow is among birds, — destroying the songsters and themselves giving no music."

Of certain actors who were always going to do this and that, he avouched they merited Aubrey's epitaph:

"He walked beneath the moon,
He slept beneath the sun,
He lived a life of going to do,
And died with nothing done."

Speaking of James E. Murdoch, he said: "In comedy he had a fine sparkle, while in tragedy it seemed to me there was no flash. Murdoch was one of the most polished and scholarly actors of the time. I am now only illustrating the distinction between art and genius as it applies to acting."

He told me too of an actor in his father's company who was constantly uncertain in his lines, and of whom he said he would make a good fencer, because he stuck so often.

Jefferson once went to see "Nat" Goodwin play David Garrick and Golightly, — the latter character in "Lend me Five Shillings," a farce for a long time played only by Jefferson. "After the performance," observed Goodwin, in recounting the matter to us all at dinner, "Jefferson came behind the scenes and said some complimentary things." For the sake of a good story, however, Goodwin twisted the conclusion to the following:

"'Did you like it?' I asked him, referring especially to Golightly. 'Of course I did!' answered Jefferson. 'But, Nat, I like mine better!'"

After the laughing had died down, true to his appreciation of a good thing, spontaneous or evolved, Jefferson remarked quietly, "I wish I *had* said that!"

Someone had presented young "Joe" Jefferson with a rather skittish puppy. Discussion rose as to the animal's breed.

"It's a cross between a sheep and a cow," Crane averred.

"Oh," dryly remarked Mrs. Drew, "you can't tell. Crane is such a flatterer."

Dogs were not much in favor at this particular moment with Jefferson, whose afternoon nap had been disturbed by the yelping of the Taber canine.

"I tell you what," proposed Jefferson, only half humorously, "let's have Joe's dog kill Taber's dog and then kill *it* for killing Taber's — thus killing two dogs with one stone."

Jefferson's eldest son, Charles Burke Jefferson, named for Charles Burke, Jefferson's beloved half-brother, has been nearly all his life the business man and financial adviser for his father. Actuated, it is said, by the popular craze for spectacular effects, he once proposed to give "Rip Van Winkle" a new phase by introducing a real lake, mountain waterfalls, and mechanical contrivances for the disappearing gnomes, etc. He outlined the scheme glowingly to his father and asked him what he thought of it.

"I think," said Jefferson, "it is the biggest piece of impudence I have heard in a long time."

At Worcester Jefferson was somewhat nervous

lest some of the people who had remained in Boston after our matinee there should not arrive in time for the evening's performance. He drummed with his fingers against the car window, and kept asking me if such a one had come, and finally, being assured that all was right, he quieted down and became very communicative.

"Do you know," he said, "there are many absurdities in 'Rip Van Winkle.' But the play is such an effective one that people don't stop to think about them. That's it. On the stage we must be effective even at the expense of correctness."

I wanted to know what absurdities in the play he had in mind, and he replied by asking me if I had ever noticed that all the characters in the drama spoke good English except Rip. "There is no consistent reason why Rip should speak broken English," he declared. I said I had never even thought of it before.

"Of course!" he replied, "the construction and the interest are too effective to permit you to notice it." He begged me therefore to bear in mind that the fundamental principle of a good play was effectiveness, and I assured him that he

had deeply impressed me with that fact. He expressed himself as pleased, "because," as he said, with characteristic emphasis on the eminently important word of a sentence, "it is *worth* it."

This whole conversation was distinctly typical of Jefferson, — the confidence he possesses in things of which by long experience he is sure; the earnestness, but not assertiveness, of his expression, both of words and countenance; the rush of images presented to his mind by the slightest suggestion; the swift second's pause he takes before shaping his response, and, finally, the quaint habit, fixed by years of professional experience, of insisting upon the final, usually humorous, word on the subject discussed.

I asked him if there were not many times of rare elation during his performances of Caleb, Acres, and especially of Rip, that stood out in his memory. He acknowledged that there were, and named his London performances of "Rip Van Winkle," during which he had had a number of what he designated as "inspired nights." He followed this with a series of questions.

"Have you seen 'Rip' very often?"

"Frequently."

"What impressed you most about it?"

"Jefferson."

"The acting?"

"Yes; of course; the acting at first, but later the play's development particularly."

"How do you mean?"

"The development of so much from so little, — from the brief sketch of Washington Irving to the rounded-out play, as we now know it, of 'Rip Van Winkle.'"

"That's it," he said; "and it is to be remembered that it was the stage which showed us the possibilities of Irving's brief sketch, and 'Rip Van Winkle' is only one of the millions of things the truthful, beautiful, beneficent unfolding of which the stage has shown us. Is it any wonder I love and reverence it? But don't forget I had the advantages of time and affection for the work, and anything may be accomplished with love and time. Why, God bless my soul! it is nearly fifty years since I first produced the play in Washington! and even before that, when Burke played it, I acted the rôle of the inn-keeper."

I remarked that his predecessors had had love

and, many of them, no doubt, plenty of time, but that they had not made the play take hold of the mind and heart of the people as he had done, or the fact would have come down to us.

"Burke did," he replied quickly; "his was a fine, strong performance." I thought that very loyal of him; but much the best of the play, I advanced, — the weird, unspeaking gnomes, the recognition scene between Rip and Meenie — had all been added since Burke's time and by Jefferson.

"And Boucicault," he added. "Don't forget Boucicault. The children at the end of the first act [as it was then, but it has since been made into two acts] and the Rip and Meenie scene are his, and mighty fine they are."

"As developed and played by Jefferson," I ventured.

"Yes, I must be frank," he answered. "I added to it, enlarged upon it," he acknowledged modestly. "I am no fool about such things. Ideas come, and I seize and apply them, but that idea and that outline were Boucicault's."

"And keeping the spirit crew of Hendrick Hudson silent and giving them an act to them-

selves, in which Rip so cleverly supplies them with words, — that was not Boucicault, was it?" I asked.

"No, no, no, no, no, no, no," he said sweetly; "that was Jefferson, and he is very, very proud of it."

"Did you regard Boucicault as a great actor?" I asked him.

"No," he rejoined; "he lacked assurance, which is a necessary ingredient. No actor can be a great actor without confidence." He told me that Boucicault had made vast sums of money with plays, adaptations, and acting, and that, on the word of Henry C. Jarrett, Boucicault's income from these sources and from stock investments had for a brief time reached the significant sum of fifteen thousand dollars a day. Boucicault, he asserted, was as much at home in Wall as in Lombard Street, and equally at his ease on the Bourse as in either of the other places.

"When he had finished writing the recognition scene between Rip and Meenie," Jefferson said, "he read it to me, and, pausing, asked me if I liked it. I assured him of my delight.

"'Do you recognize it?' he said.

"'Why, no — what do you mean?' I asked.

"'Why, it is the Lear and Cordelia scene reversed. In "King Lear" it is Cordelia who longs for recognition; here it is Rip — the man — who seeks to be known,' and sure enough it was true. He had made a very skilful rearrangement of a familiar scene.

"Boucicault had a great memory and a marvellous faculty for adaptation, but he would dabble in stocks, where, it seems to me, every fellow is scrambling for the other fellow's money. My profession does not teach me that. I never invest my money in anything I cannot see."

"I don't fully understand what you implied by Boucicault having a good memory," I remarked.

"He remembered that I had had some success in playing Yankee rôles," answered Jefferson. "He remembered also that a certain actor made a most effective Indian, and when he, Boucicault, adapted Mayne Reid's novel of 'The Quadroon' under the title of 'The Octoroon,' he worked these two characters into the piece and engaged the other actor and me to play them. 'The Octoroon' was a great success and ran for a long

time. Boucicault's income from that alone must have been large." He added that Boucicault's performance of the Indian Wahnatee, in "The Octoroon" was the best thing he ever did.

During an interval of the play one night, speaking of the continuous performances at the vaudeville theatre, he said: "Shakespeare is for all time, but 'Tony' Pastor and his fellow managers are for all day."

It was sought to tell him a card story, and thought necessary to explain the game of draw poker before beginning.

"Oh, I know the game," remarked Jefferson. "It is where 'twos' beat 'threes'!"

Speaking of the difficulty of making love scenes natural on the stage, he said:

"The most beautiful and at the same time the most natural love scene in the whole range of the drama is the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet.' Mark the cleverness of Shakespeare! He knows that men in love are fools, and so he makes Romeo wish himself a glove upon Juliet's fair hand that he might touch her cheek; and when Romeo shall die, Juliet wants him cut in little stars to make the face of heaven so fine that all

the world shall be in love with night! What a useless thing a man in love is!"

In the manuscript I sent him he added to the above: "Don't suppose I decry love — I 'm in love myself."

He said that Boucicault had preferred Mary Anderson to Julia Dean as Juliet, but that he should decide in the latter's favor, — a decision which he declared was prejudiced, for Julia Dean had been his first sweetheart.

I had a copy of "Cymbeline" bearing evidence of once having been owned by Julia Dean. I sent it to him with a letter. It came back to me with the following, written on the interleaves of the little book:

My dear Francis Wilson, — Yes, this little book must once have belonged to dear Julia Dean, and, as you say, does awaken memories of the olden time. This sweet girl and I fought our early professional battles side by side. We were in the ballet, front row, together. Happy peasants and gypsies — alternately Catholics and Protestants, Whigs and Tories — ready to change our religion or political opinion for six dollars a

week. We led the choruses, too; where we led them God only knows, for the leader never did. May we meet in another world where there are no matinees and but few managers!

J. JEFFERSON.

Jefferson expressed himself as glad and sorry that our tour was so near its end, — glad to be able to begin his vacation, and sorry to end an association which had been such an unusual one and so delightful socially and artistically. Speaking of the cast, he said: "It is a very difficult thing for an actor who has for years dominated a scene to become as it were a piece of mosaic in a picture. All have done this most decidedly, and it is much to everybody's credit, — more to the others' than mine, — for I am simply doing over in Acres what I have done before."

The subject of modern improvements coming under discussion, Jefferson questioned whether they were a benefit to mankind or not. That the telephone and telegraph facilitated the transaction of business, he of course admitted.

"They have made competition so keen and have so completely tied the man of business down to his desk that he cannot leave it for much-

needed recreation. Why, I know men," he declared, "who used to sit on my knee as boys, who are now bald-headed, sick old men. 'Why don't you get your rod and gun?' I say to them. 'Oh, I can't leave my business!' they cry. Of course they can't — the telephone and the telegraph would talk in their absence to their competitors and the butter trade would be busted!"

Speaking of libraries, he said:

"People sometimes wonder that I have no great collection of books — in fact, that I do not read more. The answer is that I am a very busy man, that I am not a consumer but a producer. I cannot live in the city, because I should be too often distracted from my work, — if I could, I should select Philadelphia, — but I must be in the country, where I can be alone to work as I please, out in the open air with my palette and my brushes. There I am a happy man."

I often found Mr. Jefferson in his stateroom painting away for dear life on a piece of tin or zinc about a foot and a half square, which, as has been explained, was a part of his "monotyping" outfit. The ministerial washwringer stood at his side ready to perform its impressive part in the

union of tin and paper, the offspring of which would be an infant prodigy of pictorial art. I wondered that he could paint while the train was in motion, but he declared the "jiggling" rather helped the "leafy quality" of the picture.

Jefferson gave Crane and me a treat one day by reading us Irwin Russell's poems, a collection of negro dialect verses which Jefferson said would one day rank high. The line

"If we are sinning we need the more your prayers,"

he called Shakespearean.

We became so interested in the reading that we did not at first notice the additional audience at my stateroom door. There, in absorbed attention, stood three of Jefferson's sons listening to their father and enjoying his appreciative comments on the poem.

My journal for May 29th says:

The tour has ended. We have shaken hands all around; inscribed final names on final programs and photographs; told each other how much we have enjoyed the social and professional participation, how much we hope for another such coalition, — a hope, likely, never to be realized.

Suggested, perhaps, by the presentation to Jefferson of a cane once belonging to William Farren, the great Sir Peter Teazle, "The School for Scandal" is talked of for another All-Star Tour next year or the year following, with Jefferson as Sir Peter. The performances to-day and to-night were as firm as any hitherto given on the trip, with an added sparkle which was due to the desire of all concerned to leave the best possible impression. The waywardness and winsomeness of Lydia were strikingly apparent. The piquancy and alertness of Lucy were never more marked, while Mrs. Malaprop outdid herself in the comic austerity with which she bade her niece "illiterate this fellow quite from your memory."

Sir Anthony, with increased impressiveness, stormed and relented, bridled and chuckled with his dog of a son, Jack Absolute, who, handsome and demurely obedient, stood the personification of the ideal lover. What earnestness and conviction the two put into the lines:

"ABSOLUTE. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

"SIR ANTHONY. 'T is a confounded lie! I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know

you are, you hypocritical young dog! But it won't do."

And as Absolute started with some show of anger to protest, how skilfully absurd appeared the smothered rage of Sir Anthony as he said, "Can't you be cool like me?" With what droll knowingness the two looked at each other when Mrs. Malaprop expressed her sorrow that her "affluence" over Lydia was so small. Sir Lucius, with his jaunty air and brogue, seemed to be in finer fettle than before as he bubbled out the well-known lines which Jefferson was fond of quoting, "It 's a very pretty quarrel as it stands." There seemed also to be an unusual amount of glibness and professional suavity in Fag, as he declared to the inquiries of Absolute that he had forgot the precise lie he had told Sir Anthony, but that it might be depended upon that Sir Anthony heard no truth from Fag. Jefferson himself, as he has done all through the trip, set the pace. He was swift, alert, exact. Such an air of breezy fussiness as he brought with him, as, with caped coat, whip, and conical hat, he swept into Absolute's apartment and saluted with "Ha, my dear friend, noble captain and

honest Jack, how do'st thou?" He was, indeed, the "eccentric planet" Absolute described him. With what seeming unconscious cleverness he baited the lovelorn Falkland, who fumed, fretted, and raved in a manner that would have delighted the sentimentalists of Sheridan's day! Just the very touch that seemed necessary to drive the jealous lover to the verge of despair, Jefferson blunderingly hit off with extraordinary accuracy. How self-satisfied Acres seemed, how positively joyous he was at the thought of his improvement in urban ways when he lifted his hat and exposed his hair done up in curl papers! The very knots of his hair, which he said he had been so long in training, seemed to partake of the comic determination of their owner, while the explanation of his genteel method of swearing was given with unusual bucolic confidence of social progress. How drolly condescending he appeared in his admission to the admiring David that dress did make a difference! How eagerly, by facial expression only, he invited the compliments of his clod of a servant, and with what self-complacence he surveyed himself in the mirror! It seemed to me nothing could

be more ludicrous than his earnest manner of insisting upon being in a rage when, in the scene with Sir Lucius O'Trigger, he feels a kind of valor rising within him; and with what refinement and delicacy he did it all! Such was the mixture of comic cowardice in his determination not to be afraid, as he listened to the whining discouragements of David, that I felt like bursting out laughing in his face. In all the realm of comic situation, there is probably nothing funnier than that of trying to persuade a coward to fight a duel. Shakespeare gives us a taste of it in "Twelfth Night," and the device has been employed with unfailing success by dramatists of all times. Sheridan has used it with telling effect in "The Rivals," and Jefferson developed and improved the opportunity to the utmost. If ever a mock hero was perfectly simulated, it was done by Jefferson in Acres. The very barrel of the duelling pistol which he carried on his arm seemed, like the owner, to lose much of its dignity, and to be fearful lest it might be obliged to fight. Besides many others, Jefferson was master of two important requirements of the stage, — that of entering

and exiting, and his first appearance with Sir Lucius in the last act of "The Rivals" was indescribably droll. There was positively no mistaking the fact that Acres was scared through and through. His insistence that there was no merit in killing a man at a distance of less than forty yards was especially effective to-night, provoking the audience to hearty laughter. The business-like bearing of Sir Lucius served only to emphasize the cowardice of the tremulous Acres. It seemed to me to be beyond the power of a dramatist to conceive — or if to conceive, to describe — the wealth of illustrative action which Jefferson lavished effortlessly on the episode of the duel in "The Rivals." It would have necessitated a book at least double the size of the play itself, merely to set forth the attitudes, the play of countenance, the felicitous emphasis, and inventive skill which Jefferson brought to bear on the whole play, but especially upon this particular scene. Few who have seen will ever forget the hopelessly absurd expression and appearance of his Acres at the moment when Sir Lucius, who has paced off the duelling distance, turns to find Bob at his heels, instead of, as was

expected, at the other end of the firing line, or when Bob leans weakly against Sir Lucius, and in reply to that gallant's question declares he does n't know *what* is the matter with him, — all of which was Jefferson and no part of Sheridan. Jefferson brushed the mildew of tradition from Acres, and brought to the part a sympathy and delicacy it never possessed nor yet was thought to possess. He lent it all the charm of his personality, and he will be regarded as the true exponent of the character here in America, I believe, far beyond the time which bounds the memory of those who saw his impersonation.

Theatrical history sometimes repeats itself. When Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Jefferson's great-grandfather, was leaving Garrick's company, the English Roscius tossed him his Abel Drugger wig, saying, " Take that, my friend, and may it bring you as much good as it has brought me." To-night, after the curtain had fallen and The All-Star " Rivals " Tour had ended, Jefferson gave Goodwin his Acres wig, saying, " Take it, Nat, and may it bring you success when you play my old friend Bob."

CHAPTER VIII

CHARACTERISTIC DAYS

IT was Jefferson's custom to begin his seasons early in the fall, and play until the weather became threateningly cold, in the latter part of November or the first part of December. He then abandoned his tour and sought the balmier clime of Louisiana or Florida, where he would fish and paint until early spring, when he would resume acting until summer weather gave indications of advancing. He played only about eighteen or twenty weeks each year. To this avoidance of the rigors of a Northern winter he attributed his steady health and the prolongation of his life. He had a plantation on Orange Island, in New Iberia, Louisiana, among the Acadian settlements, and a home, "The Reefe," at Palm Beach, Florida. His summers he spent at Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts. Here, overlooking Buttermilk Bay, he built a beautiful

FLAT-BOAT ON A BAYOU OF THE MISSISSIPPI

From a painting by Jefferson in the possession of Francis Wilson

house which he called "Crow's Nest," and here were his collection of valuable paintings, his chief studio, his books, and all those things that endear one to the place called Home.

April 1, 1891, "Crow's Nest" was burned down, and with it were destroyed many treasures of art and many things of a personal nature dear to their owner. Fortunately he had lent some of his best paintings to an exhibition. Some time after the fire, I found, on reaching Milwaukee (April 17, 1893), that Jefferson was also to play there. Acquainted with his habits, I went at once to the theatre. It was barely seven o'clock in the evening, the stage was set for the first act of "Rip Van Winkle," and I found, as I expected, Jefferson mousing about the stage, which was dark and dismal enough. I took a seat while he told me of the burning of his home. And the quiet way in which he laughed at the thought of the "natives" tugging away at heavy furniture, while Corots, Diazes, Troyons, Daubignys, and Mauves were threatened with destruction, spoke volumes for his philosophy that could thus permit him to smile in the face of such a loss. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about it, though,

was the keen sense of the ridiculous shown. It was altogether charming.

"I am glad we were away when it burned down, because curiosity would have taken some of us to the cellar where the explosion occurred, and, like our poor cook, whom we had in our family for years, we should probably have perished."

"Did I understand you were insured?"

"Yes, for $67,000; but the paintings of my father and mother are gone, and all the thousand things I've collected for years, — all of which were part of my history, any one of which would excite pleasant recollections, all lost to me forever."

"When I got your letter of sympathy," he remarked, "I said: Of all men, Wilson has lost most by this conflagration in the way of autograph letters, programs, and what not which I intended to send him. When it was seen that the house must go," he continued, "my Cape Cod neighbors bethought them of saving the household goods and rushed for the piano, a rattletrap thing I had long thought of replacing. They made for that because it was big and had shiny legs, I suppose, and pulled it out on the

grass. Much less exertion would have saved thousands of dollars worth of beautiful paintings. Nevertheless, I appreciate their intention, and am grateful for their efforts."

The barber came to shave him, — a difficult task, for Jefferson would talk and bob his head about. Curiously enough, the hair on his temples was shaved for the convenience of his wigs, but this, owing to the way Jefferson wore his hair, would not be noticed in private life except by the keen observer. We talked until "overture call" obliged me to beat a precipitate retreat.

The next year after its destruction, "Crow's Nest" was rebuilt, and into its rebuilding went a great deal of the Jefferson personality. The large, uneven boulder stones of which the first story is constructed, were refined, its owner thought, by the contrast of the heavy plate-glass windows. The second story of dark red brick, with frequent regularly placed bricks with black-glazed ends and the red-tiled roof, give the color which Jefferson's eye always craved. The chimneys are of over-burnt pieces of tile topped with a border of tall, inverted, brownish-yellow, earthen seltzer bottles. Instead of being either obtrusive or startling in

appearance, as this description might imply, the chimneys are modest-looking and picturesque. The verandas are broad and gracefully curved, and the place given over wholly to generous hospitality.

There Jefferson was as successful in playing the part of country gentleman as in any part in his professional life. His love of disputation finally deprived him of the carver's privileges, because family and guests were too frequently obliged to submit to tantalizingly "long waits," while with poised blade and fork he spun his round, unvarnished tale.

He was greatly admired and respected by his neighbors and worshipped by those in his employ. He did not expect to find in his farm employees all the cardinal virtues for twenty or thirty dollars a month. He possessed the rare quality of not seeing too much. Once, though, when he found some notice must be taken of a dereliction, he assumed an injured tone and said with much dignity:

"Why, Jones, you are drunk!"

"Oh, *awful* drunk!" was the laborer's reply, the frank and comic admission of which made

Jefferson, from suppressed laughter, incapable of further rebuke.

Industry and faithfulness were qualities in his farm help which Jefferson greatly admired. One of these, a good worker but with no skill as a gardener, desiring to come to New York, asked for a recommendation. Jefferson was puzzled, but finally wrote an open letter which complied with the gardener's request, and yet protected not only himself but any future employer. The letter read:

To Whom it May Concern: The bearer [naming him] has been employed on or about my place at Buzzards Bay for several years. He is a good man for anybody who wants just such a man.

J. JEFFERSON.

It was to Crow's Nest I usually wrote Jefferson, and from that place I received most letters from him. About the time of the rebuilding of the house I sent him for his signature a water-color drawing of himself as Bob Acres, by Charles A. Abbé. I give two letters from Jefferson concerning it:

BUZZARDS BAY, MASS., Aug. 25, 1892.

MY DEAR FRANCIS WILSON, — I do protest, good master, that thy watertype hath not appeared. I did even this very day (of all days in the year) dispatch my trusty serving-man, one John by name, a good man i' faith, too, and one of many parts — I say again, I did forthwith dispatch him to our master of the post — who in turn declareth on his nativity, look you, that neither water- nor land-type hath passed his portal since good Ben Harrison did appoint him to his trust. Beshrew me if I would treat thee and thy good work, both of which I hold in high esteem, after such a scurvy fashion; nay, more, I am honored in thy request, for thy care will hand me down to fame and goodly character — so straightway send me another portraiture and I will forthwith affix my poor name thereunto.

Thine in good service,

J. JEFFERSON.

BUZZARDS BAY, MASS., Aug. 26, 1892.

MY DEAR SIR FRANCIS, — Verily thy watertype hath turned up.

There hath been a great coil and much ado

amongst my vassals, one of whom, after due Christian torture, hath confessed that he, being much enamoured of the face (as it was a sweet reminder of mine own), did hide it in the Hen House, where it did lay so long that it be a wonder it did not either spoil or hatch. The varlet, in compensation for this scurvy act, hath by my decree been branded with the letters W. T. and turned loose upon the King's Highway, bearing an inscription about his throttle warning all true men to give him neither scrip, bread, nor housing under penalty of the Stocks.

I have signed and sealed the W. T. and dispatched it to thee to-day.

God speed thee on thy voyage, and return thee in good time to make thy long and thy short jumps.

Thine ever,

J. JEFFERSON,

M. A. & A. S. S.

I saw Jefferson for the last time in "Rip Van Winkle," October 18, 1892, when he was playing an engagement at the Star Theatre, Broadway and Thirteenth Street, New York. The line of ticket-buyers was so long that I decided to appeal

personally to the manager. I passed the gate and found Theodore Moss and Jefferson in the room adjoining the box-office. After the usual courtesies as to health and business, on my mentioning California, he spoke of the delight of his recent experience there, and said that he was going again next season, and that he had, in fact, made arrangements to do so, and those arrangements included a week's idleness to be devoted to revisiting the Yosemite Valley. I thought then that this foreboded no early retirement from active duty of the man who was by general acclaim the head and front of the dramatic world and who stood so high in the affections of the public and his profession. I was recommending him to leave his climbing of the Glacier Point Trail until the last day of his visit to the valley (a trail built since Jefferson's visit twenty years before), as, having done it recently, I believed that it was an inspiring vantage-point from which to say farewell to the many glories of the Yosemite. He interrupted me with:

"Oh dear, I could n't do any climbing! I tried it once and nearly disgraced myself. My wife was in front and, as were all of us, on horse-

or mule-back. My mule seemed to be meditating a jump over the precipice at every step. As he leaned farther and farther out, I grew more unhappy and my head more uncertain. I did n't like to be the first to cry 'halt,' and you can imagine what a relief it was to me when I heard my wife say, 'I can't ride any longer, I must get down.' Slipping from my mule's back, I fairly screamed, with an impressiveness the remembrance of which makes me laugh even now, 'Gentlemen, this lady can go no farther.' "

Among the many happy hours spent with Jefferson in viewing pictures, I recall one which I find set down under date of January 13, 1897. We were in Boston:

Jefferson sent me a special delivery letter today, asking me to meet him at the studio of a common friend, and after, lunch with him at Young's. He and his son Charles were there when I arrived. The greeting was most cordial, and together we looked over the Troyons, Diazes, Mauves, and new pictures which are always on hand. Mr. Jefferson seemed very well; was active and eloquent as usual. I think I have never seen him to better advantage these seven years.

How it makes one wonder, and how one hopes that one's threescore years and ten — for Jefferson will have reached that period in February — may be enjoyed in such excellent bodily health and mental alertness as he unquestionably possesses! He was remarkably interesting to-day. The subjects ranged from Shakespeare to "Tom" Robertson, from Botticelli to Corot, from John Hare to Locke Richardson, and the aptly applied stories and quotations came without a pause and with all the old full measure of humor and appreciation. What a benevolently apologetic glance he cast toward his son as he was about to narrate an anecdote or experience to point a moral or adorn a tale, saying, "My children have to share all my old stories!" and then added laughingly, "Once in a while, though, I tell a new one, and it always makes a big hit with them!" He is an appreciative listener, too. When the point comes, his lovely face wrinkles to its utmost capacity, — which is saying much of one of such mobility of features, — the eyes shut, his head goes back, his mouth opens, slightly displaying the plate which holds the upper teeth, while his laugh is more a joyfully prolonged high-keyed cry than, as usual, a

series of short gasps. Suddenly his head will resume its normal position, the lips will purse up, and his eyes will take on a tender gleam, and he will say, "Is n't that fine?" and forward will go his head on his chest in silent re-enjoyment of what has been said. He was more reserved and thoughtful at the studio.

He was at his mental and anecdotal best, though, at luncheon. The example of Troyon he thought most admirable. The big one which he had seen in New York did not compare, he said, with the one before us, which was in a comparatively sketchy state. Here was the picture, he went on, as the great master had laid it in with his first swift touches. How well he must have known the bovine anatomy to suggest it perfectly with the initial passes of his brush! For the connoisseur every touch that Troyon might have added would have taken away from the merit of the painting. The picture in New York was evidently one that Troyon had intended to be a masterpiece. He had painted in his background, and it was perfect in every detail. He had painted in his cattle, and they were perfect in every detail. But when it was all done there was something wrong; the

cattle did not contrast well with the background, and the background made no foil for the cattle, and though the painting brought a large price, Jefferson would not exchange it for the sketch before us, which would command a comparatively small sum. Talking of some other painters, he said, they stage-managed very well, but that Troyon did much the best acting. This Troyon, he said, was not a commercial picture; it was done by an artist for the true artistic appreciation.

"Just look at it closely, Charley," said he to his son; "see the broad, impressionistic sweeps of the brush. Oh, the whole thing must have been done in an hour, but think of the years it took him to be able to do it in that time"; and then, the picture resting on the floor, he squats down on the balls of his feet in the most agile way, and with his thumb imitates the motion he supposes Troyon made in the production of this artistic group of cattle.

"And you see there are so few points of light!" he continued. "How the man could resist putting some white here and here and here," emphasizing each adverb of place with a suggestive and characteristic motion of the hand, "I can't

imagine. Of course I should have added the light effects, and equally, of course, I should have spoiled the whole thing. No," he repeated, "every stroke Troyon added to this sketch would have made it finishedly imperfect. Did you hear what I said to Remington when he declared that Troyon could n't draw?"

"No, sir, but I should like to."

"'Can't draw, hey? Well, if that's the case, I, for one, am very glad he cannot!'"

I said that reminded me of Dr. Horace Howard Furness's reply to a young man who asked if he did not think it possible that Shakespeare had often builded better than he knew, and if it were not true that there were many things written by Shakespeare the philosophy of which the great dramatist himself could scarcely have dreamed.

"They are there, are they not, in Shakespeare?" said Dr. Furness.

"Yes," answered the inquiring youth.

"You see them, don't you?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, I should be loath to feel," Dr. Furness said, "that I saw anything in Shakespeare's works of which he himself was ignorant."

This seemed to be agreed upon as conclusive except by Mr. Jefferson, whose face for a moment wore an expression of doubt; then he launched out with:

"I should be inclined to agree with the young man as against Dr. Furness. Unquestionably Shakespeare, like all great poets, writers, thinkers, artists, builded better than he knew. What could he have known of the circulation of the blood? Yet he approaches wonderfully close to a description of it when in 'Hamlet' he makes the Ghost tell of the 'leprous distilment,' which being poured into the ear

> 'Holds such an enmity with blood of man
> That swift as quicksilver it courses through
> The natural gates and alleys of the body,'

which," Jefferson earnestly declared, "goes to prove that he builded better than he knew.

"Take Corot for another instance. 'What a fine light that is coming through those trees!' said an admiring connoisseur to Corot of a painting the master was showing him. 'Beautiful!' was the reply, 'I never noticed it before!' — Never observed before a fine light in his own painting! The man had builded better than he knew.

"See a little child rolling on the floor. It can't be more graceful if it try. Perhaps not even a Michael Angelo could depict on canvas the unconscious grace of that childish action. The child is building better than it knows. That is what I always maintain. The best things are not thought out; they simply happen, on the inspiration of the moment. These happenings are flashes of genius. The power to catch a photograph of these flashes and reproduce them at will, as on the stage, is talent."

One of the party said that he had there outlined the distinction between genius and talent, to which he agreed.

"Yes," he said, again making a professional application of the whole thing, "and here's the distinction between the artist and the actor. The artist is continually painting new pictures, but the actor must not only paint over and over again night after night the same emotions, but paint them as if he had never felt them before."

I was somewhat surprised to learn that Jefferson had offered for sale one of his Mauves — a cow grazing near the edge of a thicket — a splendid example of the artist's work, the composition,

coloring, and quality of which are very fine. I began to wonder if it were not in the purchase of paintings, as it is sometimes in the purchase of books, that the mere bargaining for them and their acquisition are, after all, the most attractive features in the transaction. Later, however, it was explained that Jefferson had thirteen Mauves, and that a promise given to Mrs. Jefferson not to buy any more pictures this season was being rigidly adhered to, but that *nothing had been said about an exchange of paintings!* Sure enough, only a few days later, three of Mr. Rip Van Jefferson's new acquirements arrived at a Boston studio, as the result of some sort of an exchange the particulars of which were not mentioned. It will be interesting to know what Mrs. Jefferson will have to say to this. Not unlikely it will end in hearty laughter on renewed promises from Rip not to drink another drop, or, rather, not to purchase another painting — *this season!*

Among those who joined us at luncheon was Mr. Charles Rolfe, whom Jefferson introduced as his grandson-in-law. The novelty of this relationship highly amused the great comedian. All being in readiness, Jefferson took his place at the

head of the table and proceeded to haggle the duck. He appeared to do everything with it except hold it down with his knee. Nobody seemed disposed to mend matters for him by telling a story, and thus directing the attention away from the mangling. On the contrary, everybody gave him the most rigid attention, for no one knew at what instant it might be necessary to return the duck. It was a shock to have one's idol thus shattered, but the conviction was painfully forced upon us that, however artistically Jefferson might act, it was evident that as a carver he had clay feet! His Caleb Plummer might provoke tears, but his carving could excite nothing but laughter. He was reminded of Bill Nye's declaration that in amateur carving the gravy seldom matched the wall-paper, which merely prolonged the agony of service while the laughter lasted.

I was telling him how I came into possession of a Rembrandt Peale painting which was among a collection made by Peale for the Baltimore Museum, and that to obtain this particular picture the late John E. Owens had bought the whole gallery of paintings. The connoisseur

Walters had, as Mrs. Owens declared, vainly importuned her husband for its purchase. I ended by saying that Mrs. Owens, to prevent its falling into the hands of mere hawkers of canvases, had sold it to me.

"Oh yes," says Jefferson, "I once owned that Rembrandt Peale along with a lot of other paintings and waxworks!" and then he gave us a humorous account of two fellow players named Ehrig and Stein and himself who ran the Baltimore Museum on shares, and that business was so poor that even the wax figures seemed to hold up their hands in protest at being put upon two-thirds salaries.

On the way over to luncheon at Young's hotel he gave me a full description of "Founder's Night" ceremonies at The Players, where Judge Olin's eloquent speech had given such good opportunities for responding. He said that after his own little effort he had those present ask him questions, — a practice which he always greatly enjoyed, because it afforded him chances for spontaneous replies. I asked him if he did not always meet with about the same inquiries.

"Yes," he replied, "about the same, but dif-

ferently garbed, which are: What is the difference between acting and oratory? Would you recommend the stage as a profession for young women? Does not the frequent representation of a character upon the stage result injuriously to the actor and the representation? What distinction and difference do you draw from the art of the actor and that of the painter? But those at The Players' gathering had come up in a new form:

"Should the actor dominate the character or the character the actor?"

"What reply did you make to that?" I asked.

"I told them that it greatly depended upon the man and upon the character, that the effect desired to be reached was the main consideration, and that, speaking for myself, if I could get it by dominating the character, then I should certainly dominate the character, but if I could only reach it by subordinating myself to the character, then I should surely subordinate myself, for the effect I certainly would have."

We fell to discussing Locke Richardson's published belief that Dame Quickly's "A' babbled of green fields," with respect to Falstaff's demise, meant that the old sinner, who had lost his voice

in the singing of psalms, and was, in the hour of his dissolution, upon a bed of repentance, had had the Twenty-third Psalm in his mind's eye:

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

I was telling Mr. Jefferson how delighted Dr. Furness had been with Richardson's solution of the question, and of his writing Richardson that had he (Dr. Furness) fallen upon such an explanation he would have been as proud as forty peacocks; but that, apropos of the Richardson solution, Dr. Furnivall had written Dr. Furness that he thought the fields of which Falstaff babbled were meant by Shakespeare to be fields represented in a shield.

"I do not believe," said Jefferson, "that Shakespeare meant more than to indicate that Falstaff's mind had been diverted by the seriousness of the situation, by his age, from warlike thoughts to the calm consideration of pastoral scenes, the beauties of nature, as of sky and trees and green grass, and that he made a peaceful end of it."

He marvelled at Shakespeare's knowledge of unusual things and of his skill in giving them

matchless expression. He told, in exemplification of this, of his own hostler's once calling him out to the stables to see the "elf-locks" the fairies had platted in the horse's mane. He accused the hostler of having twisted the hair into regular plats as a hoax, but this was denied with credible earnestness. As he viewed these "elf-locks," Jefferson was reminded of the lines in "Romeo and Juliet" in which Mercutio says:

> "This is that very Mab
> That plats the manes of horses in the night,
> . . . . . .
> Which once untangled much misfortune bodes."

Of Paganini, of Ole Bull, notwithstanding they say the latter was no musician, of Corot and Mauve, whom some accuse of not being academical draughtsmen, he said that they were men who long ago learned the grammar of their art, made new rules of their own, and played and painted themselves into the affectionate remembrance of all posterity, — that, in other words, they were men of genius.

He told me of having recently addressed the Medical College at Baltimore. The students, he said, were so enthusiastic that after the lecture

they had unhorsed his carriage and drawn him to the hotel. He gave me a dialectic account of the incident as he had overheard one darkey hostler at the hotel narrate it to one of his companions.

"What 's all de row dis mawnin' in de street?"

"Did n't yah heah?"

"No, wat was it?"

"Oh, only some dem students drawin' ole Joe Jefferson aroun' in a hack!"

After luncheon, standing in the lobby of the hotel, I discovered that Mr. Jefferson was fearfully and wonderfully, albeit sanitarily, apparelled. The weather being cold and his departure South delayed by Mrs. Jefferson's indisposition, he had furnished himself with a pair of thick woollen golf stockings with enormous plaids. His son Charles sportively drew up the leg of his father's trousers and gave us an exhibition. In addition to overshoes and his regular garments he wore a padded maroon-colored smoking-jacket, which he had almost forgotten to lay aside on entering the dining-room.

September 5, 1897, I went over to Philadelphia with Jefferson to attend the funeral of Mrs.

John Drew, our own Mrs. Malaprop, who had died at Larchmont, New York.

"I doubt," said Mr. Jefferson, after we had with difficulty passed from the church through the crowd on the way to the railway station, "if the death of any lady in Philadelphia would awaken such interest or draw together such a number of people."

I remarked that Mrs. Drew's death was sudden.

"That is as it should be," he replied, —"not to know the time when we are just alive; to be taken off in the midst and pursuit of some great interest, not when one stands tremblingly apprehensive of the blow."

On my reminding him that Mrs. Drew's forebears had been long-lived and that her mother had lived to ninety or thereabouts, he said:

"Well, I don't wish to live to be ninety. I have met one or two such, and they were pitiable objects."

He kept excellent control of himself all through the solemn service at the church. As the coffin was borne past us up the aisle, I noted his bowed head and trembling lip.

While on the way to New York, in the dis-

cussion of a theory of mentation, in which he was greatly interested, by a disciple thereof, Elmer Gates, he declared that this earth was not the end of all, and that if he could bring himself to think so he should curse the powers that made him.

Professor Gates had declared, and Jefferson was inclined to believe, that we were on the verge of a discovery that would bridge all things human and those that hitherto have been regarded as supernatural.

Professor Gates had greatly interested Mr. Jefferson by his experiments with an insect state of existence that had but a single brain cell, and had found the manifestation of this intelligence in the training of the insect to go to a certain place where it had been taught to expect a grain of sugar, or a drop of sugared water.

"When we consider the millions of brain cells the average individual possesses," he said, "this knowledge of a creature of so low a state of existence as to possess but a single brain cell is extremely interesting."

Reverting to the affairs of the stage, it was said that the prospect of good times was very encour-

aging and that the theatres would be sure to profit by it. "I can't comprehend what is meant by that," he said, "for I seem always to be the most successful when we are having periods of great financial stringency. Last year [1896] was one of my best seasons. It seems to make little difference what the times may be; if you give the public something good, there will be no question as to their going in great numbers to see it."

I asked him if he had ever found that the interest in a certain point or expression in one of his plays, expressions which had been provocative of laughter or applause, had suddenly fallen off.

"Yes, indeed, I have," he rejoined. "I discovered, after thirty-five years of playing 'Rip Van Winkle,' that I had been reading my lines, in the last act, to Meenie in an exceedingly ineffective way. The applause had disappeared and I knew not why. I gave it much thought and it worried me. Suddenly it flashed upon me that I was picturing the situation as if Meenie had not recognized me — when, in fact, there was nothing yet to lead to the belief that she might not. I was anticipating the effect, and when it

came it was weak. I returned to my former reading and the applause returned with it. I was very happy over solving the matter."

"I always believed you were mistaken, Mr. Jefferson," I said to him, "when you declared that you have had more inspired moments in painting than in acting and that you would be content to give up acting and devote your time to painting. I want to ask you bluntly, if you were forced to choose between the two, which you would select."

He looked out of the car window for some little time, evidently revolving the question in his mind. Finally he turned toward me with a fine light in his eyes, and with a beautiful smile said:

"Francis, I don't know. I love them both so much!"

He was not able to do a thing at painting, he said, if anyone were around; it was only when he was alone that he could find thoughts he deemed worthy to be put on canvas. "But," he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "if I like to be alone when I paint, I have no objection to a great many people when I act."

IMITATION OF TURNER BY JOSEPH JEFFERSON

Owned by Francis Wilson

Apropos of this, Frederic Remington, the artist, told me of meeting with Jefferson once in the South.

"What a beautiful bit of landscape!" exclaimed Jefferson.

"Why don't you get your outfit and sit down here with me and paint it?" Remington replied.

"No, no, no! Not now," said Jefferson.

"When are you going to paint it?" asked the artist.

"Oh, sometime in the future, — when I have forgotten it," was the response.

To come back to our journey to New York, Jefferson said he believed that he was making now the worthiest efforts of his painting life, and I found that he thought it not impossible that examples of his work as a painter might be sought in the future for some quality not discerned or appreciated by connoisseurs of to-day.

I asked him about some of the most exhilarating mental experiences he had ever met.

"One of them," he replied, "was answering the questions put to me by the members of The Union League Club, of New York, when

I lectured to them"; and then apropos of politics and parties, he added: "I have been a Democrat or had Democratic tendencies all my life, but I have come to the conclusion that the balance of intelligence is with the Republican Party."

I spoke to him of Julia Dean's grave being unmarked at Port Jervis, New York. He thanked me, and expressed the intention of having a stone properly inscribed and put over the grave of the woman who, I remember him to have said, was his first sweetheart.[1]

He spoke again of the question box he has at the close of most lectures, and gave me an elaborate account of the power he had of throwing his mind back in search of an anecdote with which to round out his remarks upon any subject propounded. This is what he called a subjective mind, which he said never failed him. He marvelled at the mind going in search of something to point a moral or adorn a tale while it was still answering the question put.

I told him I had seen it announced that he was going to retire in 1898. He denied indignantly that such was the case, and asked his son

[1] Mr Jefferson carried out his intention.

Charles to see that proper contradiction was made. He wished to die in harness, he declared, and to play as long as he was able satisfactorily to portray the characters with which he was identified.

I had seen him at New Orleans at a riding-school laboring to learn to ride the bicycle, and asked him if he had given it up.

"Yes," he said, "I did n't get enough out of it; and then, too, I thought it was not unlikely I should fall and break a leg, and I said, 'Old gentleman, discretion is the better part of valor, and a fall at your age would probably mean a year in bed'; so I gave it up."

Reverting again to the subject of revising plays to suit modern tastes, he thought a great many of the classic dramas would bear rearrangement. He instanced "Hamlet," which he thought would be much better if the first appearance of the Ghost were omitted. "If this were so," he said, "when Marcellus, Bernardo, and Hamlet appeared upon the platform, with the hope of seeing the apparition, there could be no doubt of the heightened interest of the audience, who, having heard of the Ghost's appearance to

Marcellus and Bernardo, would be more deeply concerned." He had recommended this to a young tragedian, Walker Whiteside, who had tried it, and with satisfaction in the result.

He related a story of Burton, who, bemoaning a poor house at Albany, was told he should have timed his visit with the incoming of the canal-boats. Next night, two belated people walked down the aisle, and Burton, turning to the actor who was playing with him, said audibly, "There 's a boat in, by gad!"

We had reached New York, and had gone as far as Forty-second Street and Sixth Avenue, by the elevated road. Looking over Bryant Park, he said:

"I remember distinctly the Crystal Palace that was built on the site of that square. But that 's back beyond your time."

Under date of November 10, 1897, I find the following record of happenings:

John Russell Young, the newly appointed Librarian of Congress, having invited us to visit and inspect under his guidance the Congressional Library, Jefferson and I found ourselves in the beautiful place at eleven o'clock,

and with Mr. Young and one of the architects began a tour of sight-seeing under most favorable circumstances. Jefferson was strong, in good health and spirits, and, as usual, anecdotal. His love of color led him to prefer the warmer rather than the lighter schemes and frescos for decoration. The pictures of Van Ingen he considered the right tone to his taste. The main hall, with its beautiful columns in white thrown out in great relief by the richer, darker colors behind them, he thought an artist's dream, — a fairyland.

Going through the Maps and Charts Room, he quite abashed Librarian Young by remarking, "You and I were born in the same year, were we not?" And seeing the look of astonishment on Young's face, he quickly recovered himself by apologizing and saying, "No, no, no! I am old enough to be your father!" and hit upon another and, I suspect, a fictitious person with whom he was of the same age. Then immediately afterwards, having gotten leeway, as it were, he named George W. Childs and Murat Halstead as the persons he had in mind. "I have a great advantage over you," he said to Mr. Young; "at your age people are sensitive about it, while

at mine we are proud of it. But just think what has come in since I was born: steam railways, steamships, the telegraph, the sewing-machine, gas, electric light, elevators, the telephone and vitascope, and many more such." He begged our guides not to apologize for the disorderly condition of the newly occupied Maps and Charts Room, which is quite complete, we were told, as to maps of the United States. "I am glad of that," said Mr. Jefferson, "for I understand the map of Europe is not perfect."

He turned humorously to me as the names of various great men were being pointed out on the ceiling, and said: "I do not see the name of an actor, do you?" "Oh yes," said Mr. Young, instantly, "there is Shakespeare!" This greatly pleased Mr. Jefferson. "Well," he returned, "the actor may not live much in posterity, but he lives like the deuce in the present!" I remarked that this might be very uncomplimentarily construed, which made him laugh. He was reminded of what John L. Sullivan, the pugilist, is reported to have said on learning of the death of Edwin Booth: "Another one of us gone!" The writer heard Edwin

Booth say, when told of Corbett having defeated Sullivan in the prize-ring, that he was glad the championship belt remained in the profession.

"People seem to forget that plays are never produced exactly as written by the author," said Mr. Jefferson. "Shakespeare must then have corrected as well as directed his own plays with Beaumont and Fletcher, so to speak, looking over his shoulder and only too anxious to see him trip. How readily he must have displayed his ignorance and duplicity if the plays were Bacon's instead of his own!"

I reminded him of Professor John Fiske's argument that the style, a personal matter, wholly unlike Bacon's, was the best internal evidence that Shakespeare wrote the plays attributed to him. That its being declared that Shakespeare could not have written this or that play because it possessed knowledge on subjects with which Shakespeare could not possibly have had any knowledge from books, was absurd, because such knowledge could have been gained, and likely was gained, from oral communication, — absorbed from the conversation of the great minds of the period in

which he lived, such minds as Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Raleigh, Selden, Daniel Donne, the Earls of Rochester and Dorset, Dekker and Bacon, all of whom were associates of Shakespeare at the Mermaid Tavern.

"Oh, it's absurd," said Jefferson, "one might as well attribute a Rembrandt painting to Van Dyke and try to defy detection. But I still maintain that these writers as well as these painters — why, I do it in my own puerile handling of the brush and in my acting — build better than they know. They don't know all that is in what they say or paint. It comes to me, to them, by inspiration, and they write it and paint it as they are moved to do, by a power they cannot explain."

Passing through another apartment, we found a blind girl reading from raised-letter pages. As we watched the girl, he said most sympathetically: "And we complain if we have a poor house! We ought to have our d——d heads knocked off!" I found on inquiring that the girl was reading a miscellaneous poetical selection. Her fingers moved over the cardboard leaves with great deftness. Jefferson asked me if I had ever met Helen Keller, who had attained such marvel-

lous proficiency of speech. She was only sixteen, he said, and talked like a Socrates.

"What did she say," I asked, "that gave you such an impression?"

"She talked of Emerson's opinion of Swedenborg, and then gave me *her* opinion of Emerson's opinion, and it was quite as good as Emerson's," he replied; "all this, mind, with a voice not one sound of which could she hear. She kept her fingers on my lip to *feel* what I was saying. I would say something and she would laugh. Then I would ask her what I had said, and she would repeat it word for word, except that, not being exactly like our utterance, it sounded foreign. She's wonderful! I have gone back to her after an absence of six months, and the moment she had touched my hand she said, 'Ah, Mr. Jefferson!' Strangest thing of all, she speaks with a foreign accent."

"A foreign accent, sir?"

"Yes; it may seem strange, but in the same institution they have colored pupils from the South who have been taught to speak, and they do it with a negro dialect."

"Why, can an accent be inherited?" I asked him.

"No, but vocal organs and personal peculiarities may be," he answered.

He was delighted with the inscriptions on the walls of the Library, because he found in them no narrow sectarianism. As he looked around at the decorations, the staircase, and general magnificence, he was reminded of a joke made by an old minstrel, Frank Brower, of Philadelphia. The minstrels, he said, in the early days were oftentimes illiterate but always very witty. Brower and some companions had been invited to a splendid repast at the palatial residence of an admirer. As Brower, who came from the humblest origin, looked about him, he exclaimed: "Boys, this reminds me of home." Then turning apologetically to Mr. Young, Jefferson said that he hoped to be excused for his occasional levity. "I must have my little joke, or I cannot exist," said this wonderful youngster of sixty-eight, who hustles about like a boy and must be occupied every minute of the day or he is unhappy. He sleeps, I find, about ten hours a day. Goes to bed at twelve, falling to sleep immediately, and rises about 8 A. M. In the afternoon his custom is to lie down about 5 P. M. and sleep until 6.30 or 7 P. M.

In the Senatorial Reading Room the balconies reminded Mr. Young of Romeo and Juliet, and Jefferson told the story of Garrick and Spranger Barry as rival Romeos. Jefferson thought it splendid evidence of the greatness as well as the elasticity of Shakespeare's writings that two men of varied talents and personality, like Garrick and Barry, should be able to give successful representations of the same character, though in an entirely different manner.

He was much taken with Blashfield's "Progress of Knowledge," in the dome of the Library. The "opalescent tints" pleased him, and he thought it fine in composition and color. The pneumatic system and the chain elevators for the delivery of books greatly interested him. When a copy of his Autobiography was thrown out to him in a padded basket, he was astonished, and said he wondered the machine didn't go further and say, "Thank ye, ma'am." He also thought it flattering to have one's own book in such a library. In the private apartments of the librarian some rare books were shown. The sight of "The New England Journal, 1827," made him exclaim, "Why, here 's a book older than I am. I did n't think

it possible!" He exhibited the proper deference before the First Folio, 1623, of Shakespeare, and laughed at one of the company who went on his knees and crossed himself before it. Apropos of Jefferson's saying that Mr. Young kept busy, the librarian quoted some lines "by an obscure Philadelphia poet":

> "Until my work is done I cannot die,
> And then I would not care to live."

Jefferson had him repeat them, he was so much impressed by them. Later, when Mrs. Young joined us, she informed me that her husband meant them to be inscribed on his tomb. Some Benjamin Franklin imprints being shown, Jefferson eulogized the great printer, calling him the practical philosopher, — a man who could draw lightning from the clouds and invent for his wife a superior kind of washtub. The book inspection closed with some Revolutionary broadsides and a view of the first edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost."

The day was beautiful, and occasionally Jefferson's glance would wander from the artistic magnificence within to the natural splendor with-

out. Once he turned to me and whispered: "I have seen nothing so beautiful as the scene through the window!"

During the afternoon he painted away in the impromptu studio he had hired for the purpose. I joked him about the *faux pas* that had so confused Librarian Young. He laughed over the third party named, but affirmed the fact as to Halstead and Childs. As he was laying in the foliage of a picture, he said to me:

"What are the best and worst things you have ever heard of the theatre? Take your time," he said, as he saw me hesitate. "It's worth considering."

I said I thought "the best thing," perhaps, was contained in Schiller's remark respecting the advantage of a standing theatre, that it would have a great influence on the national temper and mind, by helping the nation to agree in opinions and inclinations.

"Why," he said, "did Schiller think the theatre would have this influence?"

"Because, he declared," I quoted, "the stage commands all human knowledge, exhausts all positions, illumines hearts, unites all classes, and

makes its way to the heart and understanding by the most popular channels."

"That's fine!" he said glowingly. "I have tried in my feeble way to give expression to similar thoughts on the subject, but, my! how futile it all seems after such a masterly setting forth as that of Schiller!"

I said Schiller also made use of an expression I had heard him employ frequently, that of art's being the handmaid of genius or religion, or something such.

"I suppose so," he said, "I suppose so! No doubt I got it from Schiller or some other fellow, and that I have used it so often I think it's my own. None of us is too original. I do all the good things I can remember either Burton or Burke did, — with just a touch, I hope, of my own originality. Now, what's the worst thing you've heard?"

I answered that it was likely the remark of Augustine Birrell. As he asked me what it was, I could see him bristling for the onslaught he purposed to make. I told him Birrell had declared that acting was not a worthy art. I was disappointed in the way he received this. Instead

of launching out at once against the declaration, he put down his palette and brushes and sat lost in thought. Turning, after some seconds, he said gravely:

"Is *anything* worth while? What, perhaps, does the best or worst any of us can do amount to in this vast conglomeration of revolving worlds? On the other hand, is n't *everything* worth while? Is not the smallest thing of importance? Acting not a worthy art? Oh, my, I have devoted all my life to it, and I stand to-day in awe of its greatness!"

I told him it had been derisively said of him that he painted his face and exhibited himself for money.

"The more credit to me for doing so," he retorted spiritedly, "to entertain others. It is noble to give pleasure, and humanity must be pleased or it could not stand the world's trials."

I give the gist of our talk at Buffalo, March 4, 1898:

Met Mr. Jefferson here to-day. He is looking very well and said he felt so. Had been in the open air all winter at New Orleans, Jacksonville, and Palm Beach. He spoke of the

nervousness incidental to facing an audience. He declared that the feeling came from a sense of responsibility, from the desire not to make a retrograde movement in one's career, and that this nervousness increased with years. He said he had been given two dinners at New York and had prepared two speeches, neither of which he delivered, because incidents arose on each occasion which gave him better subjects for impromptu addresses. He dwelt upon the greater enjoyment and effect of an impromptu speech as compared with a cut and dried effort, but that he always went prepared in case nothing should be suggested by the speakers who preceded him.

He spoke about his home on Orange Island, New Iberia, Louisiana, and told me of one of the colored boys asking him if it were true that he was an actor.

"What do you do in the theatre?" asked the negro.

"That would be hard to describe," Jefferson answered.

"Your son Tom he tell me you stand up and Mrs. Jefson frow knives at you," said the darkey.

Jefferson replied that Tom was quite capable of saying so.

"One thing," went on the negro, "I know."

"What 's that?" asked Jefferson.

"You doan ack in no circus."

"How do you know?" Jefferson said.

"Cuz," replied the negro, "I done see you get on a horse!"

Jefferson told me also of an extraordinary letter written to him by one of his Acadian farm hands. Later, I found he had sent it, or a copy of it, to his friend E. C. Benedict, through whose courtesy I am enabled to print it:

IBERIA PARISH, LOUISIANA.

MY DEAR MR. JEFSON, — I spose you don't like to hear from myself, but, sir, I am in a bad way, sure. Your overseer he don't like me mighty well and dats the reason wot I write to you. Sometime the weder is bad and I cant get cross de prairy fo to do my work on dat plantation wot you hold yourself. Den he cuss me awful bad befo all dose black nigger hans on de place. I tink he bin writin you about me and dats why I go fo writin bout himself. Now look fo yourself no Christian man cant get cross de prary if God make it rain fo whole week. No sir, ever

so much. I wish you write him fo not cuss me befo dose black nigger hans. He say he goin to send me away if I cant cross de prary in bad wedder. You tink dat overseer is pretty good man, yes. I dont tink him a fus rate man, no. I wish you would come down here wen dat overseer aint roun I will show you some tings wot you never cant see by God almighty, so please sir dont let him send me away fo sure because den wot will I do fo myself. Please rite dat overseer to make me stay if I will and I dont never forget your kiness. Some day dat overseer is good kind of man but nex day I dont like to see any man so bad.

I am, your good friend Saturday morning.

JAN LARUE.

P. S. You see I am in a bad way sure caus my ole modder is dead for long time my father she cant see out of both of his eyes. My wife too is goin to have a young baby and you wouldnt like to be that way yourself.

Another of these Acadians, Landry by name, said to Jefferson's son:

"Joe, your fadder he play in show?"

"Yes," said Joe.

"That Mr. Florenz man, he play too?"

"Yes."

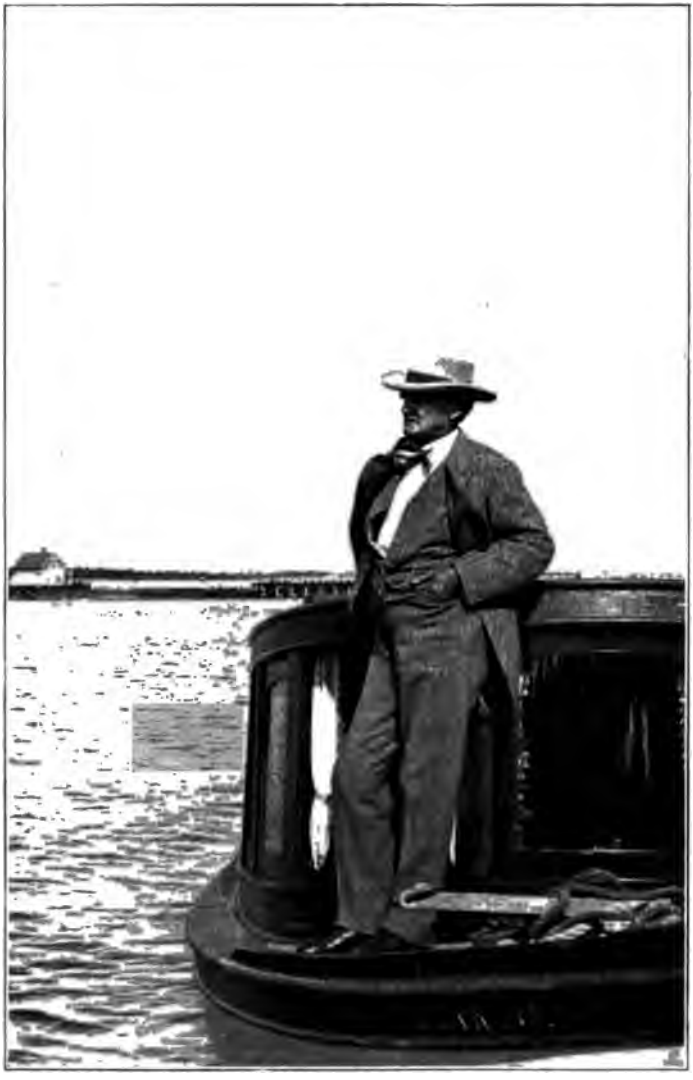
"Look, Joe, you watch dose two ole boys cut up monkey shines, you learn some thing good, sure!"

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

CHARLES LAMB, writing of Munden, says: "I have seen this gifted actor in Sir Christopher Curry — in 'Old Dornton' — diffuse a glow of sentiment which has made the pulse of a crowded theatre beat like that of one man; when he has come in aid of the pulpit, doing good to the moral heart of a people"; and Talfourd says of him that "he was in high farce where Kemble was in light tragedy."

These words, spoken nearly a century ago of the comedian Joseph Shepherd Munden apply now with especial appropriateness to Jefferson. His Acres, Pangloss, Ollapod, Golightly, and the humorous phases of Rip and Caleb Plummer were as fine in quality and effect as the best serious efforts of his contemporaries. He was in high farce what Edwin Booth was in high



JOSEPH JEFFERSON AT PALM BEACH, FLA.
(September 26, 1904)

tragedy, and he was, moreover, indebted to no particular man as a model. In those parts of "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Cricket on the Hearth" requiring pathos, Jefferson, like Munden, not only kindled the feeling of sentiment in the breasts of his auditors, but fanned it into a flame that expanded and enveloped the hearts of the multitude. With exquisite delicacy and rare power he combined pathos with humor, and in doing so towered head and shoulders above any comedian of his time and generation. By the forceful touch of his genius plays written for another age took on a new and prolonged existence. That which his predecessors had used with comparatively indifferent success became in his hands the delight of two continents, and brought him the attention and admiration of the ablest minds of the day.

Not everybody admitted the existence of a moral lesson in Irving's story, and these George William Curtis silenced once and for all by declaring that "Rip Van Winkle" is a sermon, and, if you will, also, it is a poem. Everybody knows how much Jefferson added to the imaginative quality of the play, not only by his superb acting,

but also by poetic additions and stage inventions. Except for an occasional performance by amateurs and professionals, Sheridan's brilliant comedy of "The Rivals" lay dormant for years and, save for library uses, must have soon disappeared altogether. By judicious pruning away of a lot of sentimental superfluity, much affected in a past age, and by dexterous rearrangement, condensation, and skilful additions Jefferson saved this play as a stage picture for a quarter of a century. The delight his supporters found in it is sufficient refutation of any captious criticism as to the vandal hand Jefferson was declared to have laid upon this comedy of Bath manners, in which, in Goldsmith's phrase, "all the little fishes talk like whales." By the singularity of his treatment such farces as "Lend Me Five Shillings" and "A Regular Fix" become distinctive creations, and his Mr. Golightly and Hugh de Brass charmed the cultivated people of England and America who had known of these little plays only as vehicles to eke out a performance or as a means of displaying the misconceptions of other comedians. He was one of the first actors to demonstrate the value of a dramatic conceit

compressed into a half-hour's performance instead of being drawn out into a three-act attenuation. This is only to say that he was an abler man than most people of his calling, and that the world, appreciating and applauding his ability, enriched him financially and placed him as an artist in a class by himself.

Jefferson has left us views on the art of acting which are precisely in accord with those of his distinguished French fellow-player, Talma. "Acting is a complete paradox," says this instructor of a Bonaparte. "We must possess the power of strong feeling, or we would never command and carry with us the sympathy of a mixed audience in a crowded theatre; but we must, at the same time, control our sensations on the stage, for their indulgence would enfeeble execution." Jefferson put it in the succincter phrase, already quoted, "In acting we must keep our hearts warm and our heads cool." This is the whole art of acting in epitome. While this was his way of regarding the matter, he eagerly admitted it might not be the only way, and that if the effect, which is the desideratum in all acting, could be procured by other means, he felt they should be unhesitat-

ingly adopted. "I have," he wrote, "discarded many pet theories, and as I have grown older and more experienced, have been taught, by my own observations and the successful achievements of others, that there is always room for reform." Could anything be more modest or philosophical?

In his beautiful tribute to Jefferson, Henry Watterson has given us one incident which convincingly verifies the truth of the comedian's theory with respect to the portrayal of emotions as well as of the application of that principle. "On a certain occasion," says Watterson, "he was playing Caleb Plummer. In the scene between the old toy-maker and his blind daughter, when the father discovers the dreadful result of his dissimulation — at the very crucial moment, there was an awkward hitch, and, the climax quite thwarted, the curtain came down. 'Did you see that?' he said, as he brushed by me, going to his dressing-room. 'No,' said I, following him; 'what was it?' He turned, his eyes still wet, and his voice choked. 'I broke down,' said he, 'completely broke down. I turned away from the audience to recover myself. But I could not, and had the curtain rung.' The scene had been

spoiled because the actor had been overcome by a sudden flood of real feeling, whereas he was to render by his art the feeling of a fictitious character and so to communicate this to his audience. Caleb's cue was tears, but not Jefferson's." Edwin Booth, too, has told us that, once overcome by too poignant a realization of the sorrows of Bertuccio, in "The Fool's Revenge," he marred the effect of his acting.

Jefferson loved brief and happy phrases. His conversation abounded with epigrams, and his wit, though keen and swift and bubbling and sparkling, was never biting. Scattered throughout his Autobiography in illustration of the themes he treated, will be found many humorous and pithy expressions, of which the following are but random samples:

A man seldom regrets saying nothing.

The courage of being unconventional.

The great public is unbiassed by professional jealousies.

Vagueness is not to be mistaken for suggestion.

Dramatic instinct is inherent throughout the human family.

Acting is more a gift than an art.

Cheap art is better than no art.

A first night's audience never represents the general public.

Harmony is the most important element in a work of art.

The methods by which actors arrive at great effects vary with the nature of the actor.

The power of dramatic action overwhelms the comparative impotency of dialogue.

Shakespeare is responsible for the starring system.

Guying begins where ability leaves off.

Art is so sacred in Paris and its conventionalities so firmly established [that] no change of government could affect it.

Acting is not to be confounded with wardrobe.

If necessity is the mother of invention, she is the foster mother of art.

The discordant scraping of a Chinese orchestra is dreadful to us, but if it falls harmoniously on the ears of a Chinaman, it is useless to recommend Beethoven to him.

Art is the actor's sweetheart.

Natural love, off the stage, is almost invariably comic. It is serious business to the

lovers, and that is what makes it so delightful to look at.

The tragedian has ever had an immeasurable advantage over the comedian. The old tragedies, especially Shakespeare's, contain one great character on whom the play turns. In the comedies the characters are formed in groups, and are generally so arranged that they may be in some measure of equal value.

Happy are those who in the race for fame advance steadily and by degrees; shaking hands with their competitors as they go by them, and making honest room for them to pass should they come up again.

We have been so long accustomed to the perfection of Jefferson's art that we are apt to forget the struggle he had to acquire it. It was of slow growth and of thoughtful, practical evolution. Let the student be encouraged to learn that Jefferson was long considered so imperfect an artist that Wallack and Brougham refused to permit him to appear at their theatre, then the only so-called legitimate one on Broadway. He had been, as we have seen, a stop-gap comedian

for the horse drama; he had, as he told me, been the burlesque actor of his day, playing in innumerable farces and musical burlesques revelling in such titles as "The Tycoon," "Fra Diavalo," "Beauty and the Beast," "Ivanhoe," "The Pearl of Chamouni," etc., in fact, going through all that laborious and formative experience which produced so many fine actors of the generation barely gone by. It would seem strange to the present-day theatre-goer to think of "Rip Van Winkle" given as a part, and perhaps not the main part, of an evening's entertainment, yet such must often have been the case in the early career of Jefferson, before the play had been developed into its ultimate condition. In common with most actors, he had his periods of "magnificent misinformation" as to correct costume. I once heard Stuart Robson say to him that he had seen a certain standard character played by a now celebrated comedian who, among other things, wore such and such a costume with an incongruously colored wig and a highly reddened nose.

"Surely not!" was Jefferson's reply. "Who could the man be?"

"Joseph Jefferson!" said Robson.

CONCLUSION

Jefferson did not come prominently into public view, and then not as a "star," until 1857, when at Laura Keene's theatre, in New York, he appeared as Dr. Pangloss in Coleman's "Heir-at-Law." A leading journal in its critique of the performance referred to him as "a nervous, fidgety young man by the name of Jefferson." He had still much to learn of the requirements and refinements of his art, and even to endure disappointment in his first venture as "star," before he was to stand in undisputed possession of the position he coveted.

Making no distinction between personality and emotions, I have heard it absurdly complained "by ill-natured persons, some of them envious actors," that Jefferson was the same in everything from Rip to Golightly. Yes, it was the same man, depicting different feelings, to be sure, now of heart-touching pathos, now of laughter-compelling humor, again of comic perplexity, and now of bombast, but the same man, with all the same personal peculiarities, the same skill, and, heaven be thanked, the same charm. He could not escape from himself, from individual idiosyncrasies, no man can, and if he had been

able to do so, we should have received something other than a Jefferson flavor, which might or might not have appealed to us. Like Lamb, whom he resembled in the gentleness of his nature and mayhap in the quality of his humor, Jefferson had (surprising to state!) mental, moral, and physical predilections of his own, and we should as consistently quarrel with the gentle Elia for not writing like Coleridge or like Southey or Macaulay, as with Jefferson for not one evening playing like himself and another evening like Charles Mathews or Burton or the elder Booth. What should we say of a criticism in art that expressed discontent with Michael Angelo and Tintoretto because they differed in artistic conception and expression from Bellini and Raphael, or possibly from "the insipid Carlo Dolci"?

In his attitude toward the so-called Theatrical Trust, Jefferson was criticised as not having the artistic interest of his profession at heart. This subject, which assumed such gigantic proportions in the minds of those most interested, developed, among other things, into a serious conflict between manager and manager. It received much

attention but little sympathy from the public at large, for whose fickle interest the details proved too complicated. It is a question that will solve itself, as all things having for their object the monopolizing of an art are solved. He spoke out plainly enough in the public prints, and straddled the question. This he felt was justified by a man who, recognizing himself as near the close of his career, did not wish to leave his family a legacy of embroilment.

To any one ill-informed and inconsiderate enough to ask what Jefferson did for his profession, I know not half so well how to reply as by again quoting Henry Watterson: "He did in America quite as much as Sir Charles Wyndham and Sir Henry [Irving] did in England to elevate the personality, the social and intellectual standing of the actor and the stage, effecting in a lifetime a revolution in the attitude of the people and the clergy of both countries to the theatre and all things in it. This was surely enough for one man in any craft or country."

Jefferson's mind was of an exceedingly receptive nature, and he was prone to credit all things

stated earnestly, especially when stated magnetically. He seems never to have lost a certain childish freshness of wonderment at things strange, and, following Hamlet's injunction, he therefore as a stranger gave them welcome. The weird, imaginative, poetic quality that appealed to him in "Rip Van Winkle" attracted him in other fields.

In his religion he was a Swedenborgian, perhaps, more than anything else. He was interested in theosophy, telepathy, thought-transference, and spiritualism. He said we ought not too flippantly to ridicule or reject these matters, which might well be a manifestation from the Omnipotent, another channel of communication from the Master to His flock. "God moves in a mysterious way," he quoted, "His wonders to perform."

In his early days he had suffered much from religious intolerance, and this strengthened his determination to be liberal in matters of creeds and doctrines. The idea, as stated, that too extreme a belief in spiritualism threatened at one time to cloud his understanding is not for a moment to be accepted. The controverting

argument to that is Jefferson's wonderfully saving sense of humor. He said himself that his mind was so constituted that the humorous trod swiftly upon the heels of the serious. He knew he was credulous, and joked about it, delighting to tell stories that laughably illustrated his credulity. He was amused at people's enjoyment of these narratives, exposing what they might consider his weakness, but he went on being credulous just the same. He could not help it; it was an attractive, beautiful part of the man's optimistic make-up. Like all such natures, he was strongly inclined to accept the inexplicable as the veracious. He did not hide in dark places with his theories and credulousness. His friends knew them, and he and they smiled over them. Once, when ex-President Cleveland, William H. Crane, and he were preparing for a fishing expedition, an enthusiastic expounder of occult doctrines was holding forth.

"What do you say to that?" triumphantly exclaimed Jefferson, as some strange and inscrutable happening was recounted.

"Wonderful!" replied Mr. Cleveland.

Thus encouraged, the advocate launched a flow

of eloquence at the ex-President, who, checking him, said:

"Tell it to Jefferson; he'll believe anything."

Sifted of all isms and ists, to do good was Jefferson's religion, and the whole world the place he selected, or perhaps the place for which he was especially selected, to do it in. He believed in the soul's immortality, and that he should see in another sphere those he had loved and lost in this. He attributed the fact that in all his years of travel he had never been in a railway or a steamship accident, nor even seen one, to the special guidance of God, and "with malice towards none, with charity for all," he probably came nearer than most people in this utilitarian age to living what is called "the Christian life."

With his valued and long-time friend Charles A. Walker and the Dutch artist, Albert Neuhuys, I visited him at Buzzards Bay in the summer of 1904. He looked wan and frailer than usual, and I found the family had despaired of his recovery from an illness of the previous season. I did not feel much concern for his health, for I had come to believe that, like Macbeth, he bore "a charmèd life," and that it was not unlikely he

MR. JEFFERSON, C. A. WALKER, AND CHARLES BURKE JEFFERSON ON ONE OF THEIR MANY FISHING EXPEDITIONS

From a photograph, by courtesy of Mrs. Roland Nickerson

would make good his humorous threat of outliving me. He came to the station to greet us, and he expressed delight at the courtesy paid in coming so far to see him. Always a charming host, he was especially so during this visit, modestly showing the distinguished Dutch artist all the natural and acquired treasures of his home. Tender was his half-reluctant, half-anxious attitude in exhibiting to the insistent Netherlander his studio and canvases. I found some moments alone with him, and we chatted over past and even prospective matters. He took me to the studio. As we passed through the garden, he pointed out some lath supports made by himself to engirdle his tomato vines. "The saddest thing in old age," he said, "is the absence of expectation. You no longer look forward to things. Now a garden is all expectation" — and here, the ridiculous presenting itself to his mind, he said swiftly, with his characteristic smile — "and you often get a lot you don't expect." Then resuming the serious vein he continued: "Therefore I have become a gardener. My boy, when you are past seventy, don't forget to cultivate a garden. It is all expectation." Dear man, he had been a horti-

culturist all his life long! And the flowers he tended were woven into wreaths of smiles and garlands of happiness for the multitude.

In September, 1904, he was again taken ill, and his projected tour for the fall and spring was abandoned. He remained at his home, "Crow's Nest," Buzzards Bay, for a while, and then made a brief trip to New York. He journeyed thence, by easy stages, to his Florida residence, "The Reefe," at Palm Beach.

In Washington, on his way South, he stopped with his friend Dr. George Barrie. I was just leaving that city as he arrived, and had only time to pay him courtesy over the telephone. Once in Florida, he alternately grew weaker and stronger, and at one time high hopes were entertained of his complete recovery. There was some expression of his intention to return to active professional duty. Soon, however, came his determination, in the event of fully restored health, never to play again. It is to be doubted whether he had ever been called upon to make a more difficult decision, one that affected him more deeply.

Some faint idea may be gained, then, of the

love and veneration he bore his art, of the fascination it had for him, when we view him here, past threescore years and ten, ill, but with all

> "That which should accompany old age,
> As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,"

hesitating about abandoning his profession.

He took several days of silent consideration of the matter, and quietly made his decision known to friends and family.

"I shall never act again," he said. "It will seem strange to me at first to act no more, but I shall soon get used to it. I now begin, what I have looked forward to these many years — my long, long holiday, in which I shall uninterruptedly enjoy nature in outdoor life, my painting, my books, and pleasant companionship with wife, children, and dear friends. I begin my holiday at last."

I wrote him, expressing the hope that his decision was not irrevocable, that he would consent to take his farewell, in the metropolis, of Rip, of Bob, and of Caleb.

I had in mind such an event as the glorious exits of Kemble, Macready, Munden, and Lester

Wallack. He answered that it was impossible to act upon the suggestion I offered, for reasons he would explain when we met. He ended his letter and his last earthly communication to me with: "I am still a very sick man, but I am well enough to wish you success in your new undertaking."

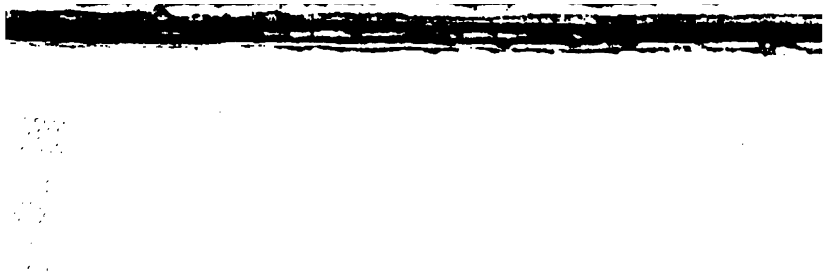
Jefferson's last appearance on any stage was made, May 7, 1904, at Paterson, New Jersey, as Caleb Plummer in Boucicault's stage adaptation of Dickens's "The Cricket on the Hearth," and Mr. Golightly in John Madison Morton's farce of "Lend Me Five Shillings." "His dramatic career," quoting William Winter, "accordingly covered a period of seventy-one years. It has been a blessing to the world, and has been illustrious to the last."

Dr. Johnson declared that Garrick's death had "eclipsed the gayety of nations and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasures," a flight of rhetoric warranted by the intimacy and mutual affection of the two men. Jefferson, of late years, had not kept himself so much in the public eye as formerly, playing but a limited number of weeks each season, and in his increasing years constantly suggesting the inevitable.

MR. JEFFERSON ON HIS SEVENTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY

(February 20, 1905)

From a photograph taken at Palm Beach, Fla. — Probably the last one taken of Jefferson



But if his death had occurred ten or fifteen years ago, the grief at his loss would have been more acute, and the remark of Johnson would have been more nearly applicable to him than to Garrick, for Jefferson was known and loved in three continents, — England, Australia, and America.

To the riff-raff of society, the man about town, the chronic first-nighter, ever on the look-out for something new to whet a jaded appetite; to the thoughtless, frivolous, and shallow-pated, Jefferson's art meant nothing, — this to his honor. It was in the minds and hearts of the intellectual and refined, and in the souls of the "plain people" that Jefferson was securely enthroned. Women, remembering the happiness he had afforded them and their children, affectionately touched his coat as they brushed by him and passed respectfully on, and men, standing before his crape-draped photograph, exhibited in a photographer's window, raised their hats in token of respect and affection. These were touching tributes, indeed, to Jefferson the play actor, to Jefferson the man, whom people honored themselves in honoring.

I have always wished it might have been Jefferson's lot to pass away upon the stage, — not, as his great-great-grandmother had done, in a fit of laughter, nor as Edmund Kean had ended his days of acting, when, sinking into his son's arms, he exclaimed, "I am dying; speak to them for me!" nor yet as Betterton or Peg Woffington, who were forced by sudden illness to close their careers, after which they lingered. The passing of Jefferson, it always seemed to me, would have been appropriately beautiful if, in the sleep scene of "Rip Van Winkle," he had one night never awaked. In the fervor of my imagination I could see the awe-filled audience filing silently from the theatre, careful lest by some inadvertency they might disturb the dreams of Rip, now, indeed, at rest with the ages in an eternal sleep. A gracious Providence selected as the day of his going hence that on which Shakespeare was born, that Shakespeare who was Joseph Jefferson's Bible.

THE GRAVE OF JEFFERSON AT SANDWICH, MASS.
Bas-relief by Charles A. Walker

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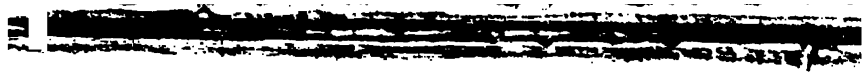

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